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by

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**A Case Study on Redevelopment in Downtown Baltimore,
and Strategies for Downtown Urban Revitalization**

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and Strategies for Urban Downtown Revitalization**

by

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Abstract

A Case Study on Redevelopment in Downtown Baltimore, and Strategies for Downtown Urban Revitalization

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Baltimore is one of the most notable examples of a city that has revitalized and improved its downtown core to become a world-class destination. In the 1950s, Baltimore faced a slate of problems similar to many other cities across the country: a declining manufacturing and industrial base, increasing rates of suburbanization and sprawl, and the advent of the superhighway. Downtowns large and small were losing businesses, residents, and investments to the hinterlands at an alarming pace. Planners attempts to intervene, while sincere, generated short term gains but produced deleterious consequences over the long term. The foresight of Baltimore's population and it's elected officials allowed them to take a different path than that of other post-industrial cities whose fortunes continued decline well into the 1970s and 80s. Turning an eye towards their natural surroundings, Baltimoreans transformed their harbor front into a front yard, turned their Central Business District into a vibrant, mixed-use 24 hour neighborhood, and emphasized the charms and historic value that had been notoriously unappreciated

for many decades. Today, Downtown Baltimore is the crown jewel of the region, with a growing residential base, ample services and attractions, and host to more than 22 million visitors annually.

In addition to looking at the specific elements that made Downtown Baltimore's turnaround a reality, this paper will delve into strategies and procedures that other cities and communities can utilize in order to revive and reinvigorate their downtown districts. Each community faces its own unique set of demographics, trends, and future challenges. It must be stressed that the intention of this paper is not to imply a one-size-fits-all solution to planning issues, but that certain measures, when appropriately tailored to a local setting can have beneficial outcomes. Urban downtowns in particular require a distinct approach due to their function as a regional focus for jobs, energy, and infrastructure. The success or failure of a city's core can have geographically far-reaching implications, and this paper will examine the strategies and mechanisms that promote a healthy, viable downtown that can serve as a positive anchor for a city and a metropolitan region.

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CHAPTER I

An Introduction to Downtown Revitalization

The ongoing revival and revitalization of Downtown Baltimore is not based on a singular strategy or plan, but is rooted in several mutually beneficial approaches. Baltimore has been shaped by a shared community vision over the years, coinciding with local and regional support, political cooperation, effective public-private partnerships, and a successful integration of land uses and activities. Downtown Baltimore's plentiful offerings range from sports and entertainment, to the arts and education, and are well within walking distance from the center of the neighborhood and served by multiple transit options. Transformed over the course of a few decades from a traditional office-dominated central business district into a bustling 24-hour mixed use neighborhood, Downtown Baltimore has gained nationwide recognition and credibility for its planning processes and the successes they have generated. Downtown features some of the city's premier destinations and landmarks, including Oriole Park at Camden Yards, the Charles Center, the National Aquarium, the Inner Harbor, the Baltimore Convention Center, Pier Six, and Lexington Market. An array of residential, commercial, cultural, educational, and historic destinations round out the city's core, drawing in residents and visitors alike.

Downtown's renaissance did not happen overnight, but rather over the course of several years. The level of success in Baltimore has been matched by scant few cities across the nation. Historic industrial buildings have been restored and converted to other uses, sports facilities have arisen, and housing options ranging from apartments to co-ops have multiplied. What was once a soulless wasteland has gradually become a prime model for urban redevelopment. The Downtown Baltimore of today is a result of strong investment, a comprehensive downtown plan (adopted in 2011), an improving national

economy, and a desire by the community to have a downtown that they can be proud of. The rejuvenation of Downtown Baltimore is important to consider as a model for other cities interested in reinventing their urban cores. Downtown remains the primary central business district in the Metro Baltimore region, hosting several major companies and organizations. Recently, there has been a steady growth in the residential base, which supports 40,246 residents and features some of the fastest growing residential areas in the city.¹ Downtown is home to more than a quarter of the jobs in the city proper and is the nexus of government functions. In 2012, 22.4 million visitors spent \$4.5 billion dollars in Downtown. Investors are actively pursuing projects that amount to approximately \$600 million and many have plans to continue developing in the core. Baltimore has assembled a variety of ‘ingredients’ that can be used in building a winning redevelopment formula.²

I am approaching this report from dual perspectives; one as a city planning student interested in the significance of the vitality of downtowns; the other as a visitor who was impressed by the effervescence and friendliness of the Charm City. Prior to visiting, my assumption was that I would find a dreary and declining rust-belt city, weathered from years of social and economic changes, another post-industrial metropolis lacking in energy, vigor, and purpose. Traveling through a handful of neighborhoods and around the central core, I was delighted to find a solid mix of new construction and preserved historic structures, major sports arenas, viable mass transit, a visible tourist presence, and a dramatic, rewarding skyline. The revival of the city center was

¹ Downtown Partnership. "Downtown Trends, Strengths, and Challenges." Downtown Baltimore--Strategic Plan, updated 2011. http://www.godowntownbaltimore.com/Publications/Strategic_Plan_Fullversion.pdf (accessed October 11, 2013).

² Moulton, Jennifer, "Ten Steps to a Living Downtown," Brookings Institute, October 2009. <http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/reports/1999/10/downtownredevelopment%20moulton/moulton.pdf> (accessed October 4, 2013).

something I had not been aware of, and lacks the publicity that downtown revivals in other cities across the country, like Chicago, Pittsburgh, or Boston. The city pioneered innovative solutions and pursued novel methods in the process of turning around their downtown. Baltimore was one of the first cities to have a waterfront aquarium, one of the first to have an urban retro-style ballpark, and one of the first to reject the encroachment of freeways through its core³; the successes of all of these endeavors have sparked imitators in cities along the coast as well as in the heartland.

As a planning student, I have been able to take an in depth look at how cities grow and function, and I have always been personally fascinated by the core downtown areas that serve as the focus of energy, jobs, and transportation for metropolitan areas and megaregions. Having had a chance to study the theories behind urban vitality in school, I decided early on that I would like to do personal research into what makes downtowns so memorable and why there is, to paraphrase Gertrude Stein, a 'there There'. It is arguable that the health of an entire region rests upon the success or failure of the core, and it is my intention to take a deeper look into the strategies and mechanisms that promote a healthy, viable downtown that serves as a positive anchor for a metropolitan region.

My intention for the final product of this report is to thoroughly review how the city of Baltimore was able to transform its downtown core. Reviving a stagnant or failing downtown is a complex challenge, one that is not solved by a simple, one size fits all solution. Each city has its own style, personality, and approach to planning. By using Baltimore as a case study, I hope to provide valuable insight to anyone interested in the methods that Baltimoreans used to turn their core into the vibrant, livable place that it is today. It is also my intention that people can extrapolate these strategies and procedures

³ Frieden, Bernard J., and Lynne B. Sagalyn. 1989. *Downtown, Inc.: How America Rebuilds Cities*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

to other downtowns across the country that are distressed and in need of a thorough community planning intervention. It must be stressed that each community has its own history, geography, style, and set of challenges to overcome; therefore the information supplied in this report is meant only as a general guideline for those cities and towns searching for a way to restore or improve their downtown districts. In addition, the focus will be on an urban downtown typology; the downtowns of smaller, mid-sized cities or rural communities do not possess the same attributes or abilities to marshal strategies that work well in urban settings. Fortunately, there is a growing wealth of literature and research available on strategies for small-town downtowns⁴⁵, and this situation seems likely to continue improving as more and more planners become interested in the mechanisms necessary to ensure the survival and revival of small towns.

The information in this report will primarily come from websites and articles concerning issues about Baltimore—the local economy, living in the downtown core, and unique challenges the city faces going forward. Census data will be used to provide both historic and current demographic information about Baltimore. Additionally, I plan to cite textbooks and academic articles in regard to the general discussion of optimal techniques and strategies that planners and citizens should employ in the course of large scale urban redevelopments.

The report will be organized into three primary sections, beginning with a general discussion of urban downtowns in general. I will cover the ingredients that make downtowns what they are: housing, transit, the arts, plentiful employment opportunities.

⁴ Walker, Philip. "Rural Downtown Development: Guiding Principles for Small Cities." *Lets' Talk Business*, December 2006. <http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/downtown.html> (accessed November 4, 2013).

⁵ Leinberger, Christopher. "Turning Around Downtown: Twelve Steps to Revitalization." Brookings Institute. <http://www.brookings.edu/research/reports/2005/03/downtownredevelopment-leinberger> (accessed November 4, 2013).

I will also look at developments in other major cities around the country and discuss how they tried to integrate these elements into their downtowns. The second section will be concerned with the case study of Baltimore, specifically the downtown revitalization that has been underway since the 1950s. In the third section I will delve into the history of the city and the local redevelopment process in particular, delineating the strategies and factors that came into play in making the city's revival a notable success story.

CHAPTER II

Elements of Urban Downtown Revitalization

In the popular lexicon, the word ‘downtown’ has referred to the heart of a city for over a century. While there is no universally recognized definition for the geographical bounds of such an appellation, it is generally agreed that downtown represents the commercial and historic core of a city.⁶ As a result of their long history, downtowns have gone through repeated cycles of development, revival, success, decline, and ultimately, redevelopment. Due to the varied nature of each metropolis, no distinct formula has been established to produce or maintain a healthy downtown core. However, several of the critical ingredients for a healthy core have been identified and studied in depth over the years. Cultural establishments, the arts, sports facilities, destination developments, and visual landmarks are all essential elements in transforming a downtown into an attractive and desirable district. Requisite amounts of adequate housing and retail space are also important factors in maintaining the vitality and appeal of a downtown, not only for residents who call the area home, but also for visitors to the community.

Of all the individual elements, housing is perhaps one of the most important, because it fills the universal human need for shelter. Without a solid residential core community, a downtown is likely to have difficulty initiating a thriving 24-hour downtown. A proper amount of retail and service offerings is important too. Once a critical mass of rooftops has been reached, these types of proprietors are likely to follow new housing, but generally do not lead. It is difficult financial math to justify the expense of opening and operating a business downtown without a necessary client base already in place. Retail and general services are important if people are going to be

⁶ Fogelson, Robert M. 2001. *Downtown: Its Rise and Fall, 1880-1950*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

living downtown, but are not likely to be developed until people are living there—a challenging dilemma. Successful integration of all of the critical ingredients is a very difficult order. It is a challenge that few cities have been able to effectively meet. Before going in depth to examine each of these elements individually, let us step back and take a look at the larger trends in downtown living over the past couple of decades.

Urban Living and Downtown Trends

Beginning in the early 1950s, city rebuilding became an obsession held by mayors, developers, and citizens alike. Many major U.S. cities saw their populations peak around this time, beginning a period of inner city decline due to the process of suburbanization enabled by the new Eisenhower Interstate Highway System.⁷ The low cost loans backed by the Federal Housing Administration and low interest loans through the G.I. Bill (for the veterans returning home from World War II) provided traction for those looking to leave the urban core and all its troubles behind. With easier commutes and the promise of larger, more commodious housing in the suburbs, people fled urban living and downtowns in droves. Large zones of land covered in newly vacated buildings were left on their own to fall into decay and disrepair. Racial minorities were lured to urban living and the central city in increasing numbers to locate steady employment and to take advantage of falling rents caused by the vacuum of suburbanization. In order to make downtowns more appealing and stem the tide of changes taking place, new projects were designed with the intention of retaining the existing population and attracting the

⁷ Brown, Jeffrey, Eric Morris, and Brian Taylor. "Paved with Good Intentions: Fiscal Politics, Freeways and the 20th Century American City." *UC Transportation Center Magazine*, Fall 2009.

original residents back. By the close of the decade, this movement had a name: urban renewal.⁸

Modern urban renewal began with a spirit of high idealism. Backers envisioned a downtown that offered proximity, density, and history that the suburbs simply could not offer. Similar to other reform philosophies, such as City Beautiful in the early part of the 20th century, this new urban renewal also focused on the goals of increasing civic pride through the creation of civic centers—clusters of buildings that benefitted the city as a whole. The promise of new libraries, museums, parks, music centers, city halls, and sports arenas was an easy sell to citizens who saw no end to the pattern of suburban emigration. Providing clean, modern, and affordable housing was another tenet espoused by advocates of urban renewal.⁹ Land acquisition and management was an initial hindrance to developing new housing projects. The solution to this roadblock was to eliminate the most run down sections of the city, in huge chunks without regard to the history of the areas in question and without the feedback of the residents who occupied the buildings. This had the consequence of driving the poorest and most vulnerable minority residents out of potentially renewable areas. These citizens were simply forced into finding homes elsewhere in the city, without due compensation. The ardor of renewal advocates accelerated the pace of removal to unprecedented levels. Developments that may have taken a private developer months or even years to bring to fruition were put up by cities before the ink on the formal paperwork was dry.

⁸ Rybczynski, Witold. "High Hopes." In *City Life: Urban Expectations in a New World*. New York: Scribner, 1995. 130-135.

⁹ Gotham, Kevin Fox. 2001. "Urban Redevelopment, Past and Present." In Gotham (ed.), *Critical Perspectives on Urban Redevelopment*. 1-31. Elsevier Science: Amsterdam

Problems didn't take long to arise from the new urban renewal projects.¹⁰ Ventures that were designed and built by renewal zealots were usually massive, one size fits all complexes that were isolated from the fabric of the city and built for a very specific group of people. The result was buildings that were disengaged from the streetscape and towered menacingly over neighborhoods due to a lack of appropriate scaling and blending. The green spaces that were so exalted by professional planners went unused because of design deficiencies and inadequate placement in relation to buildings.

Regardless of the potential for damage, urban renewal continued unabated. Rows of bland tower block apartments, seas of mid-rise office towers, and tangled webs of high speed freeways sprouted up in cities all across the continent, cutting through inner city neighborhoods and disrupting the existing patterns of urban life. While these projects may have indeed provided some beneficial outcomes in terms of moving traffic or increasing the amount of per capita park space,¹¹ they still managed to generate controversy due to all of the negative externalities associated with them, which were beginning to come into focus after several years.¹² The tower block apartments proved hard to police and thus developed a reputation as havens for crime. Office towers, serving just a single function were filled with workers during the day but emptied and were left idle after work hours. A web of expressways and freeways snaked through the

¹⁰ Fairbanks, Robert B. 2006. "The Failure of Urban Renewal in the Southwest: From City Needs to Individual Rights." *Western Historical Quarterly* 37: 303-325.

¹¹ Abrams, Charles. 1966. "Some Blessings of Urban Renewal." In James Q. Wilson (ed.), *Urban Renewal: The Record and the Controversy*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

¹² Rybczynski, Witold. "The New Downtown." In *City Life: Urban Expectations in a New World*. New York: Scribner, 1995. 201-207.

urban core and squeezed the life out of neighborhoods, funneling exhaust spewing cars from downtown to suburb and then back again during the next morning's commute.¹³

Not only were these elevated roadways aesthetic eyesores, they also had a disruptive effect on pedestrian access, making small businesses in the vicinity suffer due to the lack of foot traffic. Much to the dismay of downtown advocates, this disjointed approach to renewal and redevelopment did not make downtowns a more appealing place to people looking for an alternative to suburban development. The reality of urban renewal was in direct contrast with the ideals of proximity and density espoused by early backers of downtown renewal. The difficulties elicited by botched urban renewal, in concert with high unemployment, racial upheavals, and social changes in the 1960s and 70s instigated more dysfunction and accelerated the decline of downtowns into the next decade.¹⁴

With the 21st century upon us, there is evidence to suggest that downtowns have survived their rocky past and are once again thriving. Based on data provided from the 2010 U.S. Census, downtown and urban living trends seem to be on the upswing due to a resurgence of interest from a new generation of city dwellers.¹⁵ Downtowns are a magnet for those people in search of urban amenities: nightlife, energy, diversity, culture, opportunity. Those who are in the consumer class might choose to live there because they can afford the relatively expensive housing costs; in the modern era of conspicuous consumption nothing is more ostentatious than being able to spend a high percentage of your income for a prestigious downtown address. Some simply prefer a more urbane

¹³ "Roads to Somewhere; Interstate Highways." *The Economist*, June 24, 2006.

¹⁴ Teaford, Jon C. 1990. *The Rough Road to Renaissance: Urban Revitalization in America, 1940-1985*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

¹⁵ Katz, Bruce, and Robert Lang. 2003. *Redefining Urban and Suburban America. Evidence from Census 2000 Volume 1*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=91955>.

environment in contrast to a rural way of life. There is also a more nebulous quality to downtown living that is difficult to describe—an aura of being in the center of the action, of being a part of the most vital, central element of a place. There may be a relationship between the renewed interest in urban living and downtown population growth. The increase in downtown populations noted by the most recent Census means that people are no longer just going downtown to visit, but some are deciding to stay and make it their home.¹⁶ A renewed support and commitment from the public and private sectors, creative reuse of historic buildings, innovative financing for projects, and a thoughtful mixture of necessary amenities have all given downtown districts a foundation upon which they can flourish.

Population and Demographics

While many downtowns across the country appear to be on the rebound, in order to establish a confidence behind their comeback it is important to look at the hard numbers. Population data from the U.S. Census Bureau may be helpful in determining the magnitude and direction of future city growth. Before examining this data, it is essential to understand how data about cities, and particularly downtowns, is gathered and parsed. The term “downtown” does not have any official definition or boundary classifications with the Census Bureau, but is a widely used colloquialism used to describe the central commercial or geographical area of a city. Urban centers, suburban areas, and even small towns can possess downtowns, but all differ greatly in their content and character. Local entities are the most likely sources for delineating downtowns, which varies from place to place depending on the political and social regimes in power

¹⁶ Cox, Wendell. "Flocking Elsewhere: The Downtown Growth Story." newgeography. <http://www.newgeography.com/content/003108-flocking-elsewhere-the-downtown-growth-story> (accessed October 20, 2013).

at the time. Regardless of what locally constitutes a downtown, the Census Bureau does not give formal recognition to downtown as a unit of measurement. They instead calculate population in terms of Metropolitan Statistical Areas, known as MSA's. An MSA is officially defined by the Office of Management and Budget as "at least one urbanized area of 50,000 or more population, plus adjacent territory that has a high degree of social and economic integration with the core as measured by commuting ties."¹⁷ On the local scale, the Census Bureau offers data on Census Blocks, Census Block Groups, and Census Tract levels.

In the September 2012 special report released by the U.S. Census Bureau entitled "Patterns of Metropolitan and Micropolitan Population Change: 2000 to 2010", there is evidence to show that in the first ten years of the 21st century, downtowns are once again becoming popular places not only to work in, but also to live in.¹⁸ Between the 2000 and 2010 Censuses, metropolitan areas with five million or more people experienced double-digit population growth rates within their downtown areas, more than double the rate posted by metropolitan regions as a whole.

¹⁷ "Update of Statistical Area Definitions and Guidance on Their Uses." U.S. Office of Management and Budget. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/omb/bulletins/fy2009/09-01.pdf> (accessed October 16, 2013).

¹⁸ Wilson, Steven, et al. "Patterns of Metropolitan and Micropolitan Population Change: 2000 to 2010." U.S. Census Bureau. <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/reports/c2010sr-01.pdf> (accessed November 1, 2013).

Table 2.1: U.S. Census Changes in Population in Baltimore, 2000 to 2010

MSA	Population*		Change, 2000-2010	
	2000	2010	Number	Percent
Largest Numeric Increase				
Chicago, IL	133,426	181,714	48,288	36.2%
New York, NY	400,355	437,777	37,422	9.3%
Philadelphia, PA	214,760	235,529	20,769	9.7%
San Francisco, CA	336,092	355,804	19,712	5.9%
Washington, DC	137,064	156,566	19,502	14.2%
Largest Numeric Decline				
New Orleans, LA	116,193	80,880	-35,313	-30.4%
Baltimore, MD	165,970	155,776	-10,194	-6.1%
Dayton, OH	51,218	41,053	-10,165	-19.8%
Toledo, OH	65,857	55,739	-10,118	-15.4%
Saginaw, MI	49,678	40,004	-9,674	-19.5%
*Population less than 2 miles from city hall				

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census and Census 2000

Numerically, Chicago was the largest gainer, adding 48,000 new residents over the 10-year span. New York, Philadelphia, Washington D.C., and San Francisco all gained population as well. Gains were not made across the board, as New Orleans saw its downtown population drop by 35,000 people. Baltimore also lost population in the survey, with slightly more than 10,000 leaving the study area, which on the surface might indicate that its downtown area is not doing so well. However, this discrepancy can be explained by the fact that the Census Bureau (who has no official definition of what constitutes the boundaries of a ‘downtown’) chose to measure population changes within a two-mile radius of City Hall in each MSA. In Baltimore’s case, this somewhat arbitrary two mile radius measurement groups Downtown with unrelated central neighborhoods in the vicinity, including West Pratt, Madison Park, Penn-Fallsway, and

Fells Point. While these neighborhoods are within the city of Baltimore, they do not constitute a part of Downtown Baltimore by traditional or local standards. These neighborhoods saw declines due to the clearance of old housing stock, changes in demographics related to families moving out, and smaller households (such as empty nesters or young urban professionals) moving in to take their places. The closure and relocation of a large jail facility in the Penn-Fallsway neighborhood also registered negative population growth that impacted heavily on the Census study. When a more appropriate calibration of Downtown Baltimore is made using Census tract data¹⁹ and based on local standards, it is apparent that Downtown Baltimore actually gained 3,740 residents over the 10-year period, an increase of 21.5%, as seen in Table 2.2 below.²⁰

Table 2.2: U.S. Census Changes in Select Downtown Precincts, 2000 to 2010

Census Tract Number	Population		Change, 2000-2010	
	2000	2010	Number	Percent
2201	4,052	4,025	-27	-0.7%
401	1,739	4,006	2,267	130.4%
402	1,338	838	-500	-37.4%
1701	1,690	1,602	-88	-5.2%
1102	4,462	5,072	610	13.7%
1101	2,926	3,223	297	10.2%
302	1,161	2,342	1,181	101.7%
TOTAL	17,368	21,108	+3,740	+21.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census and Census 2000

¹⁹ U.S. Census Bureau. Maryland Department of Planning.

http://www.mdp.state.md.us/msdc/census/cen2010/maps/CT10/WithRoad/baci_ct10Roads.pdf

²⁰ *Social Explorer Professional*. Social Explorer, 2013. Accessed October 2, 2013.

Several trends can be identified that will continue to help downtowns grow and prosper in the next few decades.²¹ As the Boomer generation continues to age, they will begin to transition to empty-nesters en masse. This lifestyle shift is more amenable to downtown living rather than suburban living, since there are likely no children left in the household. Empty nesters do not have to be as concerned with the quality of the public education system, and can refocus on more leisurely activities, such as dining out, shopping, and partaking in cultural activities, which are more likely to be located in the core rather than in suburban regions. Downsizing housing space also holds appeal for this group, considering there is less interior and exterior maintenance required of smaller housing units. Even if a small percentage of the newly minted empty-nester households elect to move back into the city, downtowns will stand to benefit since this cohort is such a large percentage of the total U.S. population.

Another important cohort playing a role in downtown revitalization is young urban professionals. This group, ranging in age from 20 to 30, typically have yet to start families and prefer to live close to the variety of services and amenities that downtowns typically offer, like restaurants, art galleries, gyms, and dance clubs. The added convenience of having housing near their places of work also draws this group, who seek to leave behind the commuting culture associated with earlier generations.²² The proximity between work and home, combined with amenities and ample transportation options means downtowns will continue to capitalize on their unique position within metropolitan regions in the years to come.

²¹ Katz, Bruce, and Robert Lang. "Findings." In *Redefining Urban and Suburban America: evidence from Census 2000*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2003. 71-73.

²² Plumer, Brad. "Why Aren't Younger Americans Driving Anymore?." *The Washington Post*, April 22, 2013.

Cultural Amenities and the Arts

Cultural vitality is important to any city, large or small. Philanthropists, civic groups, and other boosters seek to provide support and attract the arts as a way to showcase the importance and maturity of their city, to provide for a higher level of education and enjoyment to the citizens, and to establish their locale on the cultural map. The arts encompasses a wide variety of organizations: ballets, operas, symphonies, theaters, art museums, sculpture gardens, public libraries, exhibitions, and ancillary pavilions, parks, and plazas specifically dedicated to performance. The importance of the arts in local communities has been recognized for decades; however there has been a renewed interest in recent years to integrate cultural amenities into the core of the city as part of a larger economic development scheme.²³

When facilities promoting the arts are grouped together and concentrated into a geographic area, additional benefits can be realized.²⁴ By clustering the arts facilities into a downtown core, the arts are made more available to the general population, as transit providers offer a greater range of services downtown, or have systems that include a downtown hub. In modern post-war American cities, it is typical to have road networks converge on downtown areas, providing easy ingress and egress to those accessing the facilities by automobile.²⁵ The economic aspects of arts centers should also be considered. Downtown arts centers can serve as a magnet for other related goods and services, including studios, galleries, art and musical instrument supply stores, and costume shops. These businesses, along with the cultural facilities themselves provide a

²³ Center for an Urban Future. "The Creative Engine." [www.nycfuture.org.
http://nycfuture.org/pdf/The_Creative_Engine.pdf](http://nycfuture.org/pdf/The_Creative_Engine.pdf) (accessed October 24, 2013).

²⁴ Wildonger, Mark . "Generating Downtown Revitalization via the Arts." News Archive. <http://www.scenichudson.org/news/article/generating-downtown-revitalization-arts/2012-12-07> (accessed October 11, 2013).

²⁵ Brown, Jeffery A.; Eric A. Morris; and Brian D. Taylor. 2009. Paved with Good Intentions: Fiscal Politics, Freeways and the 20th Century American City. *Access, the Magazine of the UCTC* 35:45.

source of steady employment.²⁶ The business activity generated by arts centers helps contribute tax revenues to the city and local governments. Visitors to the arts center are certain to partake in the cultural venues, but a visit to the opera might also include dinner, drinks, and other activities in the restaurants, shops, schools, and offices nearby. This relationship, known as a multiplier, is the key to urban vitality in the downtown core.²⁷ There are several examples of American cities that have prospered greatly from the arts. The Greater New York metropolitan area estimates that more than 150,000 people hold jobs in the arts and other creative fields, contributing to the \$11.1 billion dollar annual impact on the local economy.²⁸ In Philadelphia, the arts employ nearly 5,000 people, and generate \$16 million in state and local tax revenues, while contributing nearly \$300 million to the area economy.²⁹ At 68 acres, the Dallas Arts District is the largest such urban arts district in the nation and provides architectural landmarks for the city, as well as a place to educate the next generation of creative talent at the Booker T. Washington Arts Magnet School.³⁰

Open spaces and parklands are another amenity that has proven to be helpful in regards to stimulating interest in urban settings. Cities that incorporate parks into their downtowns are more likely to experience higher property values, maintain longer tenures for businesses, and promote healthy living principles amongst their citizens. Parks are

²⁶ Walker, Christopher. 2002. *Arts & Culture: Community Connections*. Contributions from New Survey Research. Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute Press.

²⁷ American Planning Association. "Creative Strategies for Improving Economic Vitality." *How the Arts and Culture Sector Catalyzes Economic Vitality*. <http://www.planning.org/research/arts/briefingpapers/vitality.htm> (accessed October 10, 2013).

²⁸ Kleiman, Neil Scott, et al. 2002. "The Creative Engine: How Arts & Culture is Fueling Economic Growth in New York City Neighborhoods." New York: Center for an Urban Future.

²⁹ Stern, Mark and Susan Seyfert. 2008. "Community Revitalization and the Arts in Philadelphia". Univ. of Pennsylvania School of Social Work. http://www.sp2.upenn.edu/siap/docs/culture_builds_community/community_revitalization.pdf (accessed Oct. 27, 2013).

³⁰ "Dallas Arts District." Dallas Arts District. <http://www.city-data.com/articles/Dallas-Arts-District.html> (accessed October 23, 2013).

ecologically beneficial, helping to promote groundwater recharge and mitigating storm water runoff.³¹ Flora and fauna benefit as well, as open spaces allow natural vegetation to flourish while providing a natural habitat for many species of animals. In a social sense, parks serve a vital function as the ‘front yard’ of a city, where people gather to recreate, relax, and enjoy a variety of activities ranging from festivals to rallies to concerts. A well thought out park of adequately scaled to nearby neighborhoods can also become a ‘place’, lending a sense of definition and prestige to the urban fabric that surrounds it.

Sports Venues

Most, if not all major U.S. cities feature some sort of sports component within or nearby their downtown core. Sports venues are an important feature for any downtown for several reasons. They can provide entertainment and play a role in bringing people into the core to watch games, shop, and dine, among other things. Sport venues can also play a role in stimulating economic development and regeneration, by serving as anchor tenants for a downtown district or for an adjoining retail center. Such facilities can also serve a more abstract function as a landmark or concurrently as a source of civic pride. This is especially the case when the teams that play in the venues or the venues themselves are a well established part of the fabric of the community.

In a sense sport facilities can accomplish similar aims as cultural/arts establishments, albeit with slightly different patronage demographics. Both bring a new sector of visitors into the downtown core to spend time and money. Within the past decade, there has been a great deal of writing specifically on the economic benefits of

³¹ "Economic & Health Benefits." Trust for Public Land. <http://www.tpl.org/economic-health-benefits> (accessed December 2, 2013).

sports venues. Some contend that sports facilities are helpful in revitalization via the increased economic activity that they provide, especially in downtown areas where potential visitors are more concentrated.³² Yet one question remains unanswered; what are the economic benefits of such facilities? There are limited studies available that show a positive economic impact on the downtown area or the city itself. One study concludes that new sports facilities in fact have a negligible or even negative impact on localized economic activity and employment.³³ While it is arguable that these facilities have any direct economic impact, the real focus might be on the secondary or derivative effects of sports venues. Cities such as Denver, Cleveland, St. Louis, and Washington D.C. have seen increased urban revitalization and an uptick in small business activity since the opening of new downtown sports complexes.³⁴ The question of whether or not a new sports facility caused economic regeneration does not seem to be as important as the fact that economic activity did occur where once there was none. Sports facilities may function as a catalyst for igniting interest in long disused or neglected downtown areas.³⁵

³² Siegfried, John, and Andrew Zimbalist. "The Economics of Sports Facilities and Their Communities." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 14, no. 3 (2000): 95-114.

³³ Siegfried, John, and Andrew Zimbalist. "The Economic Impact Of Sports Facilities, Teams And Mega-Events." *The Australian Economic Review* 39, no. 4 (2006): 420-427.

³⁴ Wilk, Cavan. "How to create a successful urban stadium." Greater Greater Washington. <http://greatergreaterwashington.org/post/1700/how-to-create-a-successful-urban-stadium/> (accessed October 20, 2013).

³⁵ Robertson, Robby. The Economic Impact of Sports Facilities. <http://thesportdigest.com/archive/article/economic-impact-sports-facilities> (accessed October 14, 2013).

Historic Preservation and Sustainability

In her touchstone work “The Life and Death of Great American Cities,” the noted author and theorist Jane Jacobs extols the virtues of having a variety of buildings of differing ages and succinctly describes the need for aged buildings.³⁶

“If a city area only has new buildings, the enterprises that can exist there are automatically limited to those that can support the high costs of new construction. These high costs of occupying new buildings...have to be paid off. Enterprises that support the cost of new construction must be capable of paying a relatively high overhead...to support such overheads the enterprises must be either high profit or well subsidized.”

Older buildings tend to provide cheaper rent, allowing operations and small businesses that only survive with low overhead costs to survive and thrive. Jacobs contends that new buildings are not inherently bad, but that districts seem to function best when there is a comfortable diversity of uses, and that the variety in building ages is what allows such a mix of uses to come to fruition. Neighborhoods that are composed solely of new construction tend to have limited economic function and consequently lack the convenience and architectural interest provided by older buildings. Neighborhoods filled with nothing but old buildings are similarly limited in the scope of their economics and usefulness, but this is due to the lack of capital, the lack of structural integrity, or some combination thereof.

This is where historic preservation strategies come into play. Historic preservation is an endeavor that seeks to intervene, maintain, and conserve any buildings, structures, landscapes, or objects deemed to have historical significance.³⁷ In some cases,

³⁶ Jacobs, Jane. "The need for aged buildings." In *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. 1961. Reprint, New York: Random House, 1992. 187-191.

³⁷ "National Register: Introduction." National Park Service.
http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/nrb15_int.htm (accessed October 12, 2013).

preservation can be a tool for economic development. In other cases, preservation is a way of maintaining the culture and personality that give a place its identity. Older buildings sometimes outlive the purposes that they were originally built for and are repurposed in a way that serves the community in a new capacity—this is known as adaptive reuse. Adaptive reuse reinvents buildings and refurbishes them in a way that retains their historical features.³⁸ Both historic preservation and adaptive reuse are critical in maintaining a mixture of building stock that will ensure economic diversity and vigor.

Some notable examples of preservation and reuse can be seen in cities on both coasts. Boston's Faneuil Hall was built by wealthy merchant Peter Faneuil and given to the city as a gift upon its completion in 1742.³⁹ Situated along what was originally the harbor front, it played a role as a marketplace where merchants could sell their goods, fishermen could unload and distribute their daily catch, and local vendors could set up shop to hawk their wares. Throughout the 19th century, the hall remained active with traders until roughly the mid 1900s, when heavy use finally caught up with the structure and the building began to fall into a state of disrepair. Having laid empty for a number of years, the marketplace was slated for demolition by Boston developers, but a visionary Bostonian named Jim Rouse⁴⁰ arrived just in time and worked through his development firm with the city, who formulated a plan to renovate the structure and return it to its original use as a marketplace. It was a pivotal moment for the city and for the nation, as one of the earliest instances of a historically significant building being rehabilitated and

³⁸ Pettinari, J. 1980, 'Adaptive Reuse: A Case Study', *Journal of Interior Design and Research*, Vol. 6, No. 2. 33–42

³⁹ "History." Faneuil Hall Marketplace. <http://www.faneuilhallmarketplace.com/info/history> (accessed November 15, 2013).

⁴⁰ "Who is Jim Rouse?." Columbia Archives.

http://www.columbiaarchives.org/?action=content.sub&page=history_jim_rouse&oid=1 (accessed October 15, 2013).

given value instead of taking the easier route of demolition and rebuilding. Today, the building is known as Faneuil Hall Marketplace, and is a primary landmark and meeting place for modern Bostonians. The collection of shops, restaurants, and outdoor entertainment space have transformed it into the premier urban destination for locals and tourists alike, reflected in the 18 million visitors that visit annually.

San Francisco's Ghirardelli Square began its life in 1893 when Domingo Ghirardelli built a structure to serve as a headquarters for his confectionary company. Along with the adjacent Pioneer Woolen Mills, these two complexes served their original purposes until the mid 1950s, when the headquarters were moved off site.⁴¹ Bay Area native William Roth purchased the site in 1962 to prevent the proposed demolition of the building to make way for new high-rise apartments. The historic red brick buildings and terraced courtyard underwent extensive renovations by noted landscape architect Lawrence Halprin and the architectural firm Wurster, Bernardi, & Emmons.⁴² The buildings are now home to an integrated complex featuring a variety of restaurants, retail establishments, and entertainment venues. Ghirardelli Square was added to the National Historic Register in 1982, and is recognized as one of the first successful cases of adaptive reuse on a large scale.

Another approach taken by cities interested in preserving their downtown neighborhoods is to establish an officially sanctioned historic district. While this can be a substantial and complicated process for property owners and municipalities, the potential dividends are worth the work. Formal requirements are contingent upon whether the site will be listed on a federal, state, or local level, and the parties involved must be

⁴¹ "Ghirardelli's Heritage - 160 Years." Ghirardelli. <http://www.ghirardelli.com/about-ghirardelli/ghirardellis-heritage-160-years> (accessed October 22, 2013).

⁴² "Ghirardelli Square." The Cultural Landscape Foundation. <http://tclf.org/landscapes/ghirardelli-square> (accessed October 22, 2013).

painstakingly careful in fulfilling all of the appropriate obligations. The process in which a building or district is granted historic status usually involves the following:

1. A survey identifying the history of the building or neighborhood, its original purpose, original owners, and a brief physical description
2. A nomination and concurrent filing with the National Register of Historic Places that will provide legal documentation to the property owners.
3. Listing as a historic landmark, which typically grants tax breaks and other financial incentives
4. Rehabilitation, including structural improvements and upgrades to bring the building up to modern safety codes and make the building useful for (re)occupancy.

Establishing an historic district designation can be an exhaustive and expensive process that has the potential to take several years to fully complete, but with that investment comes legal protection for the property in perpetuity, financial and tax incentives, and a recognition of the unique character that a building lends to an area. Historic districts have been used to save countless buildings across the country and have lent a hand to redevelopment successes in places like Philadelphia, Cincinnati, and Boston.⁴³

All buildings eventually reach a point in their life cycle where they become unsafe, obsolete, or both. Historically, the answer to this problem has been to tear down the offending edifice and to construct a newer, better building. This practice, while common is inherently wasteful of resources, land, and capital. In fact, the construction,

⁴³ Maag, Christopher. "In Cincinnati, Life Breathes Anew in Riot-Scarred Area." *New York Times*, November 25, 2006.

operation, and demolition of buildings accounts for approximately 40% of the United States' total CO² emissions annually.⁴⁴ Adaptive reuse and creative retrofitting of existing buildings is the first step in helping to curb our carbon emissions and goes hand in hand with making our cities more healthy, livable, and ecologically friendly. Reuse and preservation fall under the broad definition of sustainability, which is the competent management of resources resulting in a net positive effect on future generations.⁴⁵ By reusing buildings that are already built, less materials end up in landfills due to demolition, more materials are available since all-new construction is not required, and the effects of sprawl are limited by keeping new buildings off of greenfield sites. Some older buildings are more energy efficient in terms of natural ventilation, natural lighting, and thoughtful siting in terms of sunlight (which directly affects heating and cooling costs). The National Trust for Historic Preservation has been the leading organization researching the environmental impacts of adaptive reuse and has been active in promoting building rehabilitation across the U.S. Their most recent major study, "The Greenest Building: Quantifying the Environmental Value of Building Reuse" found that in almost every case, the reuse of existing structures results in less environmental impacts over their lifespan versus tearing down and building new.⁴⁶

Destination Developments and Placemaking

Downtown destination developments are a relatively new phenomenon within the planning realm. These types of developments are not centered around one specific entity

⁴⁴ "Greening Older and Historic Buildings." National Trust for Historic Preservation. <http://www.preservationnation.org/information-center/sustainable-communities/buildings/#.Un0dQ3CsiSo> (accessed November 1, 2013).

⁴⁵ "What is Sustainable Development?." International Institute for Sustainable Development. <http://www.iisd.org/sd/> (accessed November 5, 2013).

⁴⁶ National Trust for Historic Preservation. "The Greenest Building: Quantifying the Environmental Value of Building Reuse." <http://goo.gl/DWcU1b> (accessed November 3, 2013).

or audience, but rather function as a series of components, offering a result that is greater than the sum of its parts. People are able to visit these types of centers and access a variety of shops, restaurants, exhibitions, and entertainment venues in a single trip.⁴⁷ Alternatively, they have been dubbed “urban entertainment centers,” recognizing the synergy between the traditional retail/restaurant establishments and more novel partner, the entertainment establishments. With the idea of catering to the greatest number of potential customer groups in mind, these destination developments will typically be open a wider range of hours, emulating the 24-hour culture that is one of the hallmarks of a thriving metropolitan city. Since the 1990s, several dozen urban entertainment centers have been built in cities across the U.S.⁴⁸ As the name suggests, these are typically found in urban settings: San Diego’s Horton Plaza, Los Angeles’ Hollywood & Highland Center, Tampa’s Ybor City, and Manhattan’s Times Square are all located in high density areas in the heart of each city. As a regional tourism hub, Orlando is host to two urban entertainment centers: Church Street Station (located Downtown), and Downtown Disney (adjacent to the Walt Disney World Resort). All of these developments, and others like them, have integrated retail, dining, and entertainment into a single complex. In some cases, these developments contain an even broader mix that incorporates cultural amenities, sport facilities, and historic features as well. Destination developments play a role in broader economic development strategies being pursued by municipalities, and in some cases form a new landmark ‘place’ for a city.

Placemaking is both a philosophy and a process. The concept has its roots in thought established by planners such as Jane Jacobs and William H. Whyte, who

⁴⁷ Hannigan, John. "Symposium on Branding, the Entertainment Economy and Urban Place Building." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 27, no. 2 (2003): 352-360.

⁴⁸ Stone Creek Partners. "Urban Entertainment Centers." StoneCreek Partners LLC. <http://stonecreek-partners.com/?p=1010> (accessed October 26, 2013).

contended that cities should cater to people, not to cars and shopping centers. Jacobs advocated for lively, mixed use neighborhoods and stressed the importance of sidewalks in creating urban vitality⁴⁹, while Whyte emphasized other essential components necessary for social interaction, such as parks, plazas, waterfronts, and streetscapes; places that had a natural drawing power and could be augmented through landscaping, architecture, or other means to create a new sense of 'place' in a community where none existed before.⁵⁰ All too often, modern cultural centers and civic buildings are oriented inward, away from the street, their design an anathema to the spirit of public participation necessary for human interaction, enjoyment, and immersion. They are places to pass through, not places to be. As seen in Figure 2.1 below⁵¹, placemaking is a blend of many different yet inter-related theories, statistics, and metrics.

⁴⁹ Jacobs, Jane. "The uses of sidewalks ." In *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. 1961. Reprint, New York: Random House, 1992. 29-44.

⁵⁰ Project for Public Spaces. 2000. *How to Turn a Place Around: a Handbook for Creating Successful Public Spaces*. New York, NY: Project for Public Spaces.

⁵¹ "What is Placemaking?" Project for Public Spaces. http://www.pps.org/reference/what_is_placemaking/ (accessed October 15, 2013).



Figure 2.1: Placemaking, Ingredients and Attributes
Source: Project for Public Spaces

While placemaking lacks a precise definition, the spirit of placemaking is an important consideration for cities to take into account, especially when applying planning principles to a downtown core. When a community expresses its desires and goals for an area before a formal program of action is thought out, people are united behind a larger vision for what an area could be. This community vision sparks a re-imagination of the shared spaces that Whyte spoke of, allowing the citizens to set free the potential for turning those spaces into places. Improving the public spaces of a city and the lives of

those who use them means listening to the aspirations of the people, having the patience to take small steps, evaluating the best plan forward, and eventually turning a shared set of ideas into the reality of a great public place.

Downtown Housing

Housing is an essential ingredient for cities attempting to establish and maintain a bustling and successful core. Attracting residents to the downtown area has the potential to transform markets by supplying customers to downtown businesses, providing shelter for those who work nearby, and by contributing energy and vitality to the core during off-peak hours. Cities across the nation are beginning to realize the value in having a healthy residential component as a part of their downtown core. Residents who elect to live downtown rather than in the suburbs can benefit by cutting their transportation costs in favor of housing that is closer to their place of employment.⁵² Elected officials and community leaders are in a unique position to boost the viability of downtown living through promotion and spreading the word about the potential benefits. Bringing residents into the heart of the city may provide an economic boost, through increased spending. Residents provide a new customer base for retail establishments, which require a critical mass of customers in order to survive and turn a profit. New retail development is also likely to spring up, as businesses visualize the increasing amount of ‘rooftops’ available in a downtown market. With a variety of thriving businesses, people who live downtown are better served and are more likely to remain in the neighborhood if all the necessary shopping amenities are located within reasonable traveling distance. Housing is also beneficial in terms of balancing out the office population that traditionally

⁵² Taecker, Matt. "Downtowns Offer the Promise of 'Deep Affordability'." <http://bettercities.net/news-opinion/blogs/matt-taecker/14162/downtowns-offer-promise-deep-affordability> (accessed September 29, 2013).

occupies the downtown area every weekday from nine to five. A resident population occupying downtown during those off peak hours results in a more 24-hour city, and also helps to utilize and maximize the costly public investments made in downtown infrastructure.⁵³

Residential development has the potential to be a primary driver for downtown revitalization. Successful integration of housing into a downtown core depends upon several things: quantity of units constructed, the quality of the units, and where they are located relative to other districts and uses. Examples of successful downtown housing developments include Equity Residential's Acheson Commons in Berkeley, California and their most recent project, Ballpark Lofts Apartments in Downtown Denver. Post Properties' Post Addison Circle in Dallas and Trammell Crow Residential's Alexan 360 in Midtown Atlanta are also notable examples.

Builders face a complex environment when it comes to building downtown and face some potential impediments along the way, including high land prices, regulatory mechanisms, and conflict with political agendas or neighborhood groups. In light of these impediments, it is increasingly obvious that the public sector may step in to provide a role as a mediator to help get residential projects off the ground. Several options are available to be implemented in order to facilitate downtown housing construction. One of the more popular methods utilized in recent years is the Tax Increment Financing Zone, also known by its acronym "TIF". A type of value capture system, TIF uses future gains in tax revenue to subsidize current improvements towards general infrastructure improvements.⁵⁴ These capital improvements, such as streets, electric lines, and sewer

⁵³ Jennifer, Humphreys. "Promoting Smart Strategies to Encourage Downtown Housing." Downtown Austin Alliance, September 2005.

⁵⁴ Ward, Kevin. "Tax Increment Financing – a Model in Motion." Cities@Manchester. <http://citiesmcr.wordpress.com/2012/04/30/tax-increment-financing-a-model-in-motion> (accessed October 14, 2013).

hookups, allow the development to occur, which in theory raises property values and thus increases the taxable value of the properties. That increase in property tax revenues is what is known as the ‘increment’ and is used to pay down the debt incurred for the provision of the initial improvements. Other popular methods include special assessment districts such as BID’s⁵⁵ (Business Improvement Districts), federal loan guarantees, or property tax abatements.⁵⁶ Individually or in concert with one another, these techniques have proven to be effective in bridging the gap between public and private sector development participants.

Examples of Downtown Redevelopments

Within the last decade, major metropolitan cities across the nation have refocused their time and efforts into renewing their downtown districts. Cities as diverse in size and geographic location as Cleveland, St. Louis, San Diego, and Dallas/Fort Worth have had success stories of varying degrees. Millions of dollars have been spent on groundwork, feasibility studies, architectural drafts and environmental impact assessments. But it is the meticulous examination of demographic trends among local populations that yields the most useful data in helping to shape the future plans for urban downtown districts. Planners and developers are able to meet the expectations and desires of potential residents through feedback, which is helpful in creating a place that will lure people back downtown not only to work, but to live, recreate, and participate in the larger community of the city.

⁵⁵ Gopal, Devika. Promoting Retail to Revitalize Downtowns: An Examination of the Business Improvement District Idea. Boston University: Department of Urban Studies and Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2003.

⁵⁶ Fish, Kristen. "Downtown Financing Options." DownTown Economics, January 2013. <http://fyi.uwex.edu/downtowneconomics/files/2013/03/Downtown-Financing-Options-Summary-of-Presentation-by-Kristen-Fish.pdf> (accessed October 29, 2013).

The City of St. Louis created its Downtown Strategic Land Use Plan (Downtown Now!) in 1993, and updated it in 2010 under the name “Downtown Next.”⁵⁷ The city had undergone decades of decline, with the downtown district being hit especially hard. New plans call for reinvigoration through the establishment of new housing, public infrastructure improvements, and a new stadium. In order to realize this plan, the city government will offer a variety of financial incentives to new residential development. Tax credits and abatements are being used to turn vacant historic buildings into economic assets. New parks connect Downtown to the city’s premiere landmark, the Gateway Arch. The renewed focus on downtown growth has attracted major companies like Osborn & Barr, E+U Architecture, NSI Marketing Services and Group 360 to experience a vibrancy downtown that wasn’t present even a decade ago. Small businesses have benefited from the revitalization as well, with nearly 80% of businesses downtown having 25 employees or fewer. St. Louis is doing its best to integrate the historic nature of the core with modern amenities and a fresh outlook.

The Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex is distinctive in being home to two established downtown precincts, one each in Dallas and Fort Worth respectively. Dallas’ revitalization began in 1988 with the establishment of the State-Thomas TIF Zone.⁵⁸ Bearing the designation “TIF #1”, it was Dallas’ first experimentation with tax increment financing and was retired in 2008 after all the loans and interest were paid off for the final infrastructure improvements. Covering 100 acres, the TIF district was 95% vacant when it was first established. Private companies such as the Columbus Realty Trust and Post Properties constructed several high density apartment and condominium projects in

⁵⁷ "Downtown Next Plan." Partnership for Downtown St. Louis.

<http://www.downtownstl.org/docs/DNext2020Report10-0419.pdf> (accessed October 20, 2013).

⁵⁸ Scott, Brendan S.. "Factors that Influence the Size of Tax Increment Financing Districts in Texas ." Applied Research Project. Texas State University-San Marcos, May 2013.

the area, spurring a renewed interest in the nearby Uptown neighborhood. Mixed income housing and multifamily units were built to accommodate a variety of households. Today, the State Thomas neighborhood is only seven percent undeveloped and boasts some of the highest and most stable property values in the downtown area.⁵⁹ As a result of this success, Dallas now has 18 active TIF zones scattered across the city, including the City Center TIF, whose stated goal is “to enhance the downtown residential and retail markets and encourage new investment by providing a source of funding for public amenities and infrastructure improvements.” Planners are hoping to replicate the success of State-Thomas in downtown, where high quality residential housing will eventually spur on business development and increased property values.

Fort Worth’s downtown revitalization is centered on Sundance Square, which is not a city square in the traditional sense but rather an informal designation of 35 blocks of developed land in the heart of the city.⁶⁰ The vision for what would become Sundance Square was initiated in 1982, when the Bass family decided to use their considerable personal wealth to create “a downtown they could be proud of.” What was once a wasteland of ramshackle and underutilized buildings today is a mecca for shopping, dining, and social interaction.⁶¹ Red brick streets are bustling with activity day and night and are lined with new restaurants, nightclubs, art galleries, and shops, providing employment to citizens and adding money to the city’s tax base. Restored historic buildings like the Sanger Lofts house a new generation of people who chose to live downtown amidst all the action.⁶² The Bass Performance Hall, opened in 1998 is the

⁵⁹ "State Thomas TIF." Dallas Economic Development. <http://www.dallas-ecodev.org/incentives/tifs-pids/state-thomas-tif> (accessed October 2, 2013).

⁶⁰ Sundance Square Partnership. <http://www.dwsp.org/sundancefact.pdf> (accessed October 2, 2013).

⁶¹ Bernard, Murrye. "Fort Worth's Revitalized Downtown." Buildipedia. <http://buildipedia.com/aec-pros/urban-planning/fort-worth-master-plan-overview> (accessed November 5, 2013).

⁶² Patoski, Joe. "From Cowtown to "Wowtown"." *Texas Monthly*, April 1998.

crown jewel of Sundance Square, heralded for its superb acoustics, aesthetic ambience, and its intimate feel. Except for the lack of a sports facility, downtown Fort Worth comes the closest to having all of the ingredients for a vibrant and healthy core.

While all of these cities have been host to downtown rejuvenations, each has used its own distinct strategies and thus experienced differing degrees of success. It is the proximity and diversity of places and uses that seem to make a city function better and thus more desirable overall. Cities that have all of these elements, but spread across different parts of the city suffer because of the induced traffic caused by people going from one separate place to another. This physical separation limits and diminishes the positive influence of these elements on a downtown area. Cities that have concentrations of some amenities within the core, but lack others are not living up to their full potential. What we can learn from the success stories is that the more of the ‘ingredients’ for downtown vitality coexist, the more likely a city will be able to build and maintain a healthy core.

CHAPTER III

Case Study: Downtown Baltimore

After decades of suburbanization and exurban growth, the narrative of the new century is the resurgence of cities. In the most recent Census, more than two thirds of the U.S. population lives in an urban setting, a number that will consistently rise over the next decade if current trends continue. In Baltimore, the number of people moving downtown continues to rise as well—a harbinger of growth city-wide. The most recent estimates from 2012 indicate that more than 42,000 people live in Downtown Baltimore, moving there from other districts within the city as well as from other places across the country. People’s reasons for settling in Downtown Baltimore are as diverse as the racial and economic backgrounds of those who call Downtown home. Some are attracted by the diversity offered by the community. Some people like living in a walkable setting with easy access to a plethora of goods and services. Others are drawn to the historic housing stock within the area. Proximity to employers, educational institutions, cultural centers, is also a major draw.

Certainly, preconceptions regarding Baltimore abound—that it is still a blue collar, working class town, that its downtown is a central business district solely occupied by the office crowd from nine to five, or that it lacks the cultural offerings of its larger neighbors, Philadelphia and Washington. The truth about Baltimore, and Downtown in particular, is that it is a vibrant and modern place where thousands of people choose to live, work, and play.⁶³ The author Edward Glaeser, in his book “Triumph of the City,” writes about the enduring strength of cities and reflects upon the social habits of humanity. “The ability to connect with one another is the defining characteristic of the

⁶³ "Baltimore’s Urban Revival?." Citizens Planning & Housing Association
<http://www.cphabaltimore.org/2013/06/baltimores-urban-revival/> (accessed October 8, 2013).

human species.”⁶⁴ What cities like Baltimore offer is a place to make those connections. Aside from the availability of this ‘community’, cities present environmental and social appeal in their density and closeness, which allows innovation to flourish, provides ecological benefits, and gives choices to people that help them to excel economically.

Downtown Baltimore is most well known for its historic buildings and the redeveloped Inner Harbor, but it is much more than that. It is one pole of the Washington-Baltimore MSA, and home to the highest density neighborhoods in the city. Within a one mile radius of Pratt and Light Streets, there are more than 110,000 jobs, 42,000 residents, and 19,000 students. It ranks as the fifteenth-highest employment density and eighth-highest downtown residential density, ahead of cities like Denver, Atlanta, Miami, and Washington D.C.⁶⁵ While Downtown only composes four percent of the city’s total land area, it is home to 17% of the total businesses and 27% of all jobs. Downtown businesses produce more than \$17 billion dollars in aggregate economic yield (representing 30% of the city’s total), and pay out \$7.7 billion in wages. Downtown’s property owners contribute \$106 million to the property tax base (13.5% of the city-wide tax yield), and nearly \$64 million in income taxes (24% of the city-wide total), which goes towards supporting social and municipal services that span across the entire city.⁶⁶

But Downtown is more than just offices and commercial space. In terms of residents, it is the home to some of the fastest growing Census tracts in the state of Maryland. Newer neighborhoods like Harbor East and established neighborhoods like Mount Vernon are in demand and support high occupancy rates due to the diversity of

⁶⁴ Glaeser, Edward L.. *Triumph of the City*. New York: Penguin Press, 2011.

⁶⁵ "Downtown at a Glance-Quick Facts." Downtown Partnership of Baltimore. <http://www.godowntownbaltimore.com/economicdev/2011%20quick%20facts.pdf> (accessed October 10, 2013).

⁶⁶ "2012 State of Downtown Report." Downtown Partnership of Baltimore. <http://www.godowntownbaltimore.com/docs/2012sodt.pdf> (accessed October 10, 2013).

land uses, ease of mobility, and aesthetics of distinct architecture. Baltimore's center has bounced back over the decades, overcoming waves of suburban flight and generations of urban decay. This revitalization has been possible due to the occurrence of several strong factors: local and regional support, public private partnerships, and successful integration of land uses.⁶⁷ Baltimoreans as a community put together the vision for what they wanted their city and their downtown to look like, and as a result, today Baltimore is one of the most visited and celebrated cities in the nation. All of the elements necessary for this success can be found downtown: the arts, cultural venues, sports facilities, historic buildings, entertainment, retail, housing, and much more.

Arts and Cultural Establishments

With the decline of industrial cities over the past 40 years and the subsequent loss of blue-collar manufacturing jobs⁶⁸, cities have had to innovate with new strategies to employ and retain residents. Losing the old economic base to countries where labor is cheaper, officials have targeted a new group of citizens to fill in the growing middle class gap: the 'creative class'. This term was coined by theorist Richard Florida to represent the socioeconomic class of workers that are the driving force behind economic development in post-industrial North American cities.⁶⁹ This 'creative class' is found in a variety of fields, from biotech to theater, engineering to education, design to small business. Research on the rise and influence of this class shows that they are not motivated to move to places based on the traditional infrastructures that municipalities

⁶⁷ Levy, John M.. *Contemporary Urban Planning*. 7th ed. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2003.

⁶⁸ Kneebone, Elizabeth. "Job Stall Sprawls." Brookings Institute.
http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/reports/2013/04/18%20job%20sprawl%20kneebone/srvy_jobsprawl.pdf (accessed October 20, 2013).

⁶⁹ Florida, Richard L.. *The Rise of the Creative Class*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2002.

typically focus on, like transportation or retail development. Rather, as highly educated people they are drawn to places that are diverse in population, inclusive in nature, and provide an opportunity to showcase their considerable skills as creative people. This is where the arts come into play.

Baltimore's art scene covers a wide array of genres serving diverse populations from both the city and the metropolitan region. Dispersed throughout the entire city, the arts industry has proven to be a driving force within the local economy. Studies by the Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts (BOPA) estimate that the total economic impact of nonprofit arts and cultural organizations and their audiences during 2005 exceeded \$272 million, helping to support 6,418 full time positions and producing over \$12.5 million in revenue to city government.⁷⁰ Hundreds of artists, galleries, museums, venues, and organizations call the region home, with representation from just about every type of artistic community—visual arts, design, theatre, music, dance, and more. Additionally, many educational institutions located near or within Baltimore offer degree programs in the arts. The range of arts and cultural facilities in Downtown Baltimore can be seen in Table 3.1 below.

⁷⁰ "BOPA: Arts and Economic Prosperity." Americans for the Arts.
http://www.bop.org/uploads/file/The_Economic_Impact_of_Nonprofit_Arts_and_Culture_in_the_City_of_Baltimore.pdf (accessed October 10, 2013).

Table 3.1: Selected Arts and Museums in Downtown Baltimore

Name	Type	Exhibits
National Pinball Museum	Amusement	History and evolution of pinball machines
Maryland Art Place	Art	Contemporary art exhibition gallery
Port Discovery	Children's	Children's museum, science exhibits and events
Phoenix Shot Tower	Industrial	Tower used to produce lead shots, tours operated by the Carroll Mansion
Historic Ships in Baltimore	Maritime	Historic museum ships including the USS Constellation (1854) and a lighthouse
Geppi's Entertainment Museum	Media	Comic books, toys, posters, cinema ephemera, television, radio, computer games
American Visionary Art Museum	Art	Visionary art
Baltimore Museum of Industry	Industry	Exhibits highlight Baltimore/Maryland's companies and industries, including a cannery, a garment loft and machine shop, a print shop, and the food industry
Maryland Science Center	Science	Displays include physical science, space, Earth science, the human body and blue crabs that live in the Chesapeake Bay
Maryland Historical Society Museum	History	Collections of MD art, furniture, silver and quilts, costumes, ceramics, and toys
Mother Seton House	History	Home where Elizabeth Ann Seton founded a school for girls
Walters Art Museum	Art	18th- & 19th-century art, manuscripts & rare books, Renaissance & Baroque Art
National Museum of Dentistry	Medical	Dental history, oral health and dentistry professionals
UofM School of Nursing History Museum	Nursing	History of the School of Nursing at the University of Maryland, Baltimore
Babe Ruth Birthplace Museum	Sports	Life & times of Babe Ruth, also the official Museum of the Baltimore Orioles and the archives of the Baltimore Colts and Johnny Unitas
Sports Legends Museum at Camden Yards	Sports	Exhibits on the Baltimore Orioles, Baltimore Ravens, Baltimore Colts, University of Maryland, Baltimore Elite Giants, Baltimore Black Sox

Source: Maryland at a Glance. <http://msa.maryland.gov/msa/mdmanual/01glance/museums/bcity/html/bcity.html>

In the summer of 2013, the city of Baltimore embarked on establishing its third designated arts and entertainment district, named as the Bromo Tower Arts District in reference to the landmark Emerson Bromo-Seltzer Tower that was originally a part of a factory in central Baltimore. The new Bromo Tower district joins Station North and Highlandtown as official designated arts districts within Baltimore. The new district covers 117 acres, 2,000 residents, and hundreds of properties.⁷¹ Some benefits of this official arts district designation include state income tax abatements for artists working

⁷¹ Gunts, Edward. "New arts district approved for west side of downtown Baltimore." Baltimore Sun, May 31, 2013. <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/breaking/bs-md-new-arts-district-0601> (accessed October 18, 2013).

and living within the area, as well as tax breaks for the owners of commercial spaces that have been renovated for qualified arts related uses. A map of the district shown in Figure 3.1 below indicates the 31 major ‘art assets’, and also identifies existing residences, signaling the importance of another separate but integral ingredient of downtown revitalization, housing.⁷²

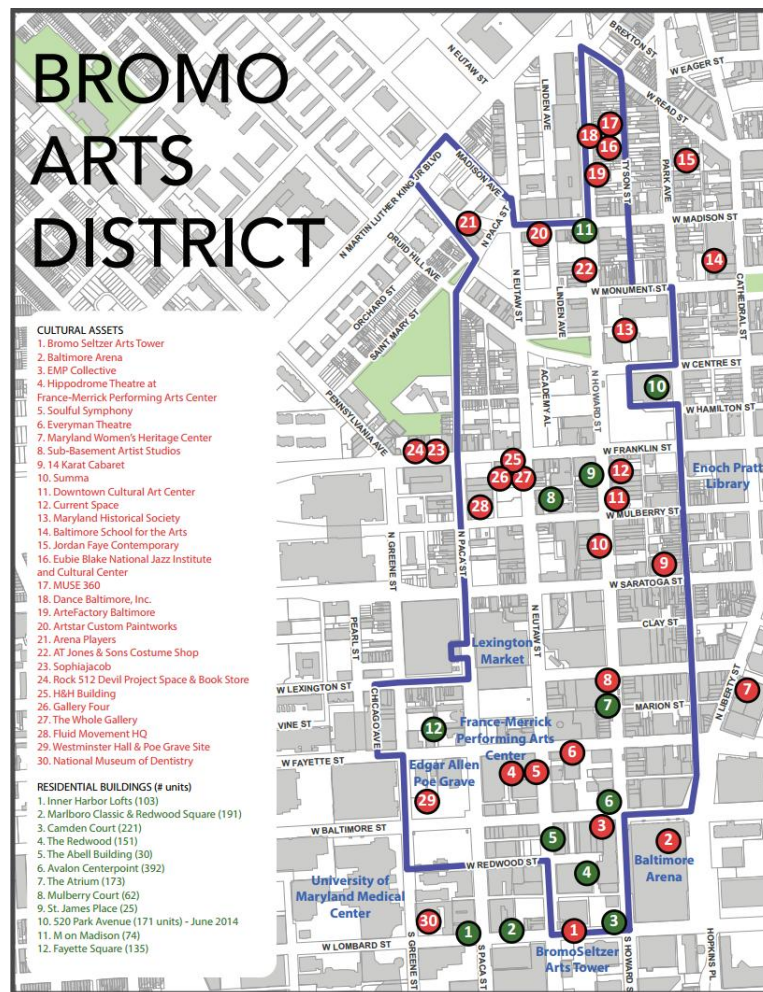


Figure 3.1: Residential/Cultural Assets, Bromo Arts District (est. 2013)

⁷² "Bromo Arts District: Map." Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts. http://www.bop.org/bop/uploads/File/MAP_ON_MAP.pdf (accessed October 14, 2013).

The Station North Arts and Entertainment District was officially designated in 2001 and has had much success in terms of meeting its goals. The mission of the district is to “create a vibrant neighborhood where arts, artists and entertainment venues flourish in the midst of an economically diverse community with a wealth of healthy residential, retail and commercial offerings.” Official arts district sanctioning has opened up tax abatements for artists as well as developers, promoted the redevelopment and restoration of vacant properties, and championed the district as a destination for Baltimoreans. The artistic energy that imbues the neighborhood emanates from places like the Oliver Street Building, the Copy Cat Building, and the Cork Factory; these once abandoned industrial spaces began providing artists’ housing and work space in the 1970s. Maryland Institute College of Art is also a considerable stakeholder in the area. During the last decade, MICA’s expansion and continual annual attraction of nearly 400 burgeoning artists to the neighborhood has helped to solidify both the City of Baltimore as well as Station North as a community that welcomes the creative class. In 2010, Station North reported having 521 artists and 22 arts-based enterprises registered in the district.⁷³ David Bilenberg, the executive director of Station North Arts and Entertainment District, sees further potential in the district and thinks that the pattern of growth will continue. Renovations of the City Arts building, a \$15 million dollar project that will support 70 affordable work-live units, and the establishment of new entertainment/retail venues are cited as confirmation of this positive trend.

An arts district in concert with other revitalization efforts can be a way to concentrate and support creative activity, draw additional commerce, and give an area a

⁷³ "About." Station North Arts & Entertainment District. <http://www.stationnorth.org/about/> (accessed October 14, 2013).

distinctive sense of identity.⁷⁴ They instill vibrancy in neighborhoods, impart an artistic energy, and function as a magnet for ancillary arts concerns. Cities and downtowns alike stand to benefit when they recognize the wide ranging economic and social benefits that the arts and associated cultural institutions bring to the table. If the city decides to make creative endeavors a city-wide priority, Baltimore could easily become a rising ‘creative capital’, able to leverage its existing arts venues as well as its prime location between two more arts-developed neighbors, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C.

Sports Facilities: M&T Bank Stadium, Camden Yards, and Baltimore Arena

The Baltimore Arena, located between the Convention Center and the Inner Harbor, was opened in 1962 as the Baltimore Civic Center.⁷⁵ Concurrent with the redevelopment of the Inner Harbor in the 1980s, the Civic Center was extensively renovated and reopened to the public in 1986 as the Baltimore Arena, with a seating capacity of 14,000. The Arena hosts a range of sports events, including boxing matches, hockey games, wrestling contests, soccer matches, and motocross competitions. Truly a versatile complex, the Arena even accommodates music concerts, trade shows, and political rallies. Annually, the Arena attracts nearly 800,000 visitors to Downtown Baltimore.

M&T Bank Stadium is the Baltimore region’s major league football stadium, hosting the Baltimore Ravens. Formerly known as Ravens Stadium at Camden Yards, the facility was built over the site of a shuttered piano manufacturing facility, opening its doors to the public in 1996. The location was chosen to maximize the investments made

⁷⁴ University of Maryland, College Park. "Arts Impact." Examining the establishment of an arts district on Baltimore’s West Side. http://arch.umd.edu/images/student-work/documents/arts_impact_studio_report.pdf (accessed October 12, 2013).

⁷⁵ *Baltimore Sun*, "7,760 Attend Center Opening," October 24, 1962.

in infrastructure and transit improvements for the nearby Orioles Ballpark (also at Camden Yards, a reference to the former B&O Railroad yards that used to occupy part of the site). Between the lower level, club level, two rows of luxury suites, and upper decks, the capacity fluctuates between 68,000 and 71,000 depending on the specific configuration. The cost to build this facility was \$220 million dollars (\$315 million in 2013 dollars), which is being recouped over a 20-year period through ticket and concession sales, parking revenues, and advertising.⁷⁶ Presently there is no significant mixed use development adjacent to the site, but the proximity to Downtown combined with relative ease of access to the greater transportation network means that the site has prime potential for transit-oriented development in the near future.⁷⁷

The Oriole Park at Camden Yards was one of the first “retro” styled ballparks to be built in the modern era and has proven to be a trendsetter in terms of stadium development. Of the three major sports centers located downtown, Camden Yards has had the greatest impact upon the city, vastly broadening the appeal of the Inner Harbor area, and kicking off the development of one of the most admired multisport complexes anywhere. Before Camden Yards, the Orioles played at Memorial Stadium, an aging city-owned 35-year-old structure that was shared between Orioles and the Baltimore Colts football franchise, before they left for Indianapolis in 1984 due to declining attendance and a lack of governmental support. Locals shared a sense of trepidation that the Orioles might leave town too unless a more appropriate, modern structure was built to house the team. With the success of the Harborplace development downtown in the mid 1980s, the natural solution seemed to be locating the proposed new arena somewhere

⁷⁶ Pierre, Robert, and Claudia Deane. "Many in MD Object To Stadium Funding; But Poll Finds Support for Slot Machines." *The Washington Post*, June 28, 1998.

⁷⁷ Godschalk, David R., Daniel A. Rodríguez, Philip Berke, and Edward John Kaiser. "Transportation and Infrastructure Systems." In *Urban Land Use Planning*. 5th ed. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006. 225-248.

near the city center. The team's owner, Edward Williams, wanted an old fashioned style ballpark but with modern conveniences that could level the playing field for the Orioles and allow them to compete with the top teams in the league. In itself this was a radical departure from the bland concrete 'doughnut' style stadiums that were commonly built in the 1970s and 80s.⁷⁸ The Camden Yards parcel was the site of a disused B&O Railroad yard that was a decrepit eyesore abutting the southern edge of downtown. Architects conscientiously designed the new ballpark to mesh with the urban block pattern downtown. It was also novel at the time for featuring real grass and for being built expressly as a baseball-only facility.



Figure 3.2: Transition of Camden Yards, 1948 to 2013

Funding for the ballpark follows a somewhat complex formula: the State of Maryland built the stadium at a cost of \$110 million dollars, with the money to be paid back over several years by contributions from the Orioles and the city of Baltimore, who would gain a new home and a new tax base, respectively. Rent for the park equals seven percent of net admissions revenues plus a percentage of concessions, parking, advertising

⁷⁸ Penman, Tim. "The Revolutionary Design of Camden Yards." Sportsideo-Baseball History Blog. <http://sportsideo.com/blog/timpenman1056/general/baseball/the-revolutionary-design-of-camden-yards-3385.html> (accessed October 15, 2013).

and club-level admissions. From 1992 through 2009, the Orioles' average rent was about \$4.5 million. The stadium authority also receives 80 percent of a 10 percent state admissions tax. From 1993 through 2010, this payment averaged about \$4.2 million. Baltimore pays out \$1 million per year toward the debt on Oriole Park, as required by state law, and will continue to do so through the end of the stadium lease in 2021. After the \$1 million dollar contribution is subtracted from the admissions tax revenue, the city nets an average of \$38,681 a year from the Orioles.⁷⁹ In 2007 and 2009, the city paid out more toward the stadium debt than it made in admission tax revenue.

However, the purpose of the new Orioles stadium was never to make money as a successful fiscal project. Rather it was designed as a social project to benefit the citizens of Baltimore. As put by the local newspaper shortly after its opening, "For the outside world, the ballpark defines Baltimore," citing the outside impacts the building has had on the city's image.⁸⁰ Celebrating its 20-year anniversary in 2012, the success of Camden Yards has helped Baltimore become a valid destination for tourists and businesses alike, and has helped make it one of America's most livable cities.⁸¹ Imitators have sprung up in downtowns far and wide, from Washington's Verizon (formerly MCI) Center to Houston's Minute Maid Park, to San Francisco's AT&T Park. The ballpark has helped to transform an empty, dangerous, and seedy neighborhood into a bustling entertainment area filled with pedestrian traffic and street life. A question raised in an earlier paragraph asked whether or not sports complexes contribute to the economic health or provide any

⁷⁹ Kilar, Steve. "18 years later, still a debate over success of Oriole Park." *Daily Record*, September 12, 2010. <http://thedailyrecord.com/2010/09/12/18-years-later-still-a-debate-over-success-of-oriole-park> (accessed October 17, 2013).

⁸⁰ Penman, Tim. "The Revolutionary Design of Camden Yards." Sportsideo-Baseball History Blog. <http://sportsideo.com/blog/timpenman1056/general/baseball/the-revolutionary-design-of-camden-yards-3385.html> (accessed October 15, 2013).

⁸¹ Greenburg, Zack. "America's Most Livable Cities." *Forbes Magazine*. <http://www.forbes.com/2009/04/01/cities-city-ten-lifestyle-real-estate-livable-cities.html> (accessed October 25, 2013).

type of financial benefit to a city. In Baltimore's case, the economic impacts are evident. While the stadiums themselves generated very little direct cash flow for the state or the city governments, the secondary impacts helped to augment small business activity, increase downtown spending, and encourage relocations of many large scale corporations back to downtown.⁸² The Baltimore Arena was a small part of a larger scheme that contributed to downtown's revival, and certainly redevelopment in the core would have occurred even if the two stadiums at Camden Yards had been built elsewhere. What these sports facilities did was give citizens and tourists alike another reason to come downtown to spend time and money.

Destination Developments: Charles Center and the Inner Harbor

One of Baltimore's first forays into downtown rejuvenation dates back to the early 1950s. Facing the pressures of a potential municipal bankruptcy due to suburban flight, a group of downtown businessmen formed the seminal "Committee for Downtown." Their clarion call to action was the closure of the O'Neill's Department store on the day after Christmas in 1954, a business that played a role as a major downtown retail anchor and employer.⁸³ Recognizing the importance of stabilizing the city, a larger effort arose dubbed "the Greater Baltimore Committee," spearheaded by developer James Rouse (of the Rouse Company, who later earned acclaim for his revolutionary reimagining of Boston's Faneuil Hall). The city's leading businesses, law firms, hospitals, and educational establishments threw their combined weight behind the group, which was able to produce a master plan for the downtown area in 1957. The

⁸² Kurkjian, Tim. "Camden Yards Turns 20." ESPN. http://espn.go.com/mlb/story/_/id/7756571/oriole-park-camden-yards-turns-20-years-old (accessed October 15, 2013).

⁸³ Kibler, Jennifer. "O'Neill's Department Store." Jennifer Kiblers Blog. <http://jkibler.wordpress.com/author/jenyk713/page/2/> (accessed October 15, 2013).

Charles Center was identified as the first phase of the CBD Master Plan.⁸⁴ With the blessing and full support of the mayoral administration of Thomas D'Alesandro, a \$25 million dollar bond issue was sent to the voters in 1958 and approved. The Charles Center was unusual for its time in that it was not a tear down and rebuild "clean slate" project, but rather an amalgamation of existing edifices combined with modern structures (See Figure 3.3 below). Thirty-three acres were earmarked for the Center, which featured three landscaped public plazas linked by walkways, staircases, and pedestrian bridges. These plazas concealed underground car parks, a required amenity at the time to lure the auto-centric population. By 1963, nine buildings in the Center were complete including the Blaustein Building, a Hilton hotel, and the new Morris Mechanic Theater.

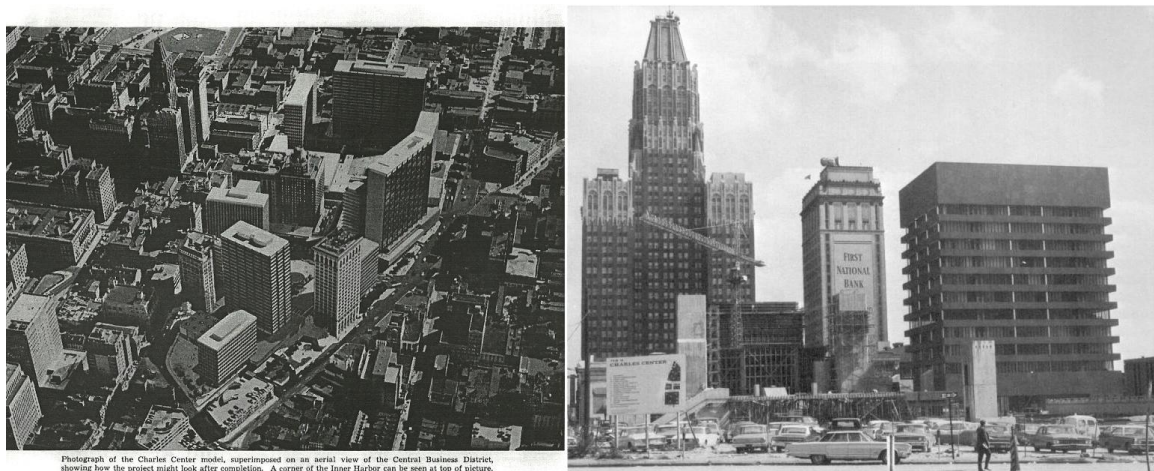


Figure 3.3: Charles Center Under Construction, 1961

Source: Charles Center: a Case Study of Downtown Renewal. ULI Technical Bulletin 51, Nov. 1964.

With the new mayoralty of Theodore McKeldin underway, the second phase of development commenced.⁸⁵ The success of the Charles Center spurred the city to

⁸⁴ Millspagh, Martin. "Baltimore's Charles Center: a Case Study of Downtown Renewal." ULI Technical Bulletin 51, November 1964.

⁸⁵ "Baltimore's Charles Center-Inner Harbor Timeline, 1950-2000." Global Harbors. http://www.globalharbors.org/baltimore_inner_harbor_timeline.html (accessed October 15, 2013).

announce a bolder initiative in 1963, declaring that the 300-acre Inner Harbor area would be gradually redeveloped, financed by \$2 million in municipal bonds. New construction and renovations gradually shifted to the southern edge of Downtown towards Baltimore Harbor, incorporating the re-use of the old Pier Four power plant on Pratt Street and a rebuilding of the city's Farmer's Market. In 1969, the U.S.S. Constellation was relocated to the Inner Harbor as the first attraction in the "Playground for Baltimoreans," the tagline for the new Baltimore Harborplace.⁸⁶ This is also the same year that Two Charles Center opened to the public, comprising three residential towers which constituted the first new major housing developments in the core in nearly two decades. The new headquarters of the Baltimore Federal Reserve opened at Charles Center in 1971, which spurred additional corporate relocations downtown including IBM in 1972, the World Trade Center in 1974, and a new U.S. Federal Building and Courthouse, opened in 1977.

Marking the 200th anniversary of the nation's founding in 1976, the Bicentennial celebrations brought the eyes of the nation to Baltimore once again. To commemorate the historic contributions of the city to the national psyche, an exhibition of clipper ships and other 18th century vessels were brought to the Inner Harbor for display and public tours.⁸⁷ Hundreds of thousands of people visited the ship exhibition over the course of the year. Realizing the popularity and success of this endeavor, consultants to planners and city officials advised that a permanent major tourist destination could be established by building major attractions.

⁸⁶ "Global Harbors: A Waterfront Renaissance." Stein, Cari (producer). Owings Mills: Maryland Public Television. Sept. 2, 2009. Television

⁸⁷ Fee, Elizabeth, Linda Shopes, and Linda Zeidman. "A View from Federal Hill." In *The Baltimore Book: New Views of Local History*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991. 230-240.



Figure 3.4: National Aquarium at HarborPlace
Source: <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/User:AndrewHorne>

Taking heed of this advice, the State of Maryland appropriated \$35 million dollars for the construction of the Baltimore Convention Center at the corner of Pratt and Charles Streets, directly across from the harbor front. With the Convention Center as a sure bet, the Rouse Company subsequently announced the building of the Harborplace development, a festival marketplace composed of two pavilions and a four story building that was planned to house dozens of restaurants, shops, galleries, and stores.⁸⁸ To this day, the Harborplace has been a huge success and a major draw for downtown, featuring a mix of local retailers as well as national chains. The synergy of the Harborplace and the Convention Center became the catalyst for many new developments in the area,

⁸⁸ "Baltimore's Charles Center-Inner Harbor Timeline, 1950-2000." Global Harbors. http://www.globalharbors.org/baltimore_inner_harbor_timeline.html (accessed October 15, 2013).

including the Hyatt Regency Baltimore (the most successful hotel in the Hyatt chain), the Columbus Center, and the highly acclaimed National Aquarium (see Figure 3.4 above). Newer innovations, like Power Plant Live! and Pier 6 provide nightlife and entertainment options to visitors and residents of Baltimore.

Regarding green space, Baltimore has two major parks located somewhat proximally to its urban core, Druid Hill Park and Patterson Park. Both of these spaces are located more than two miles from Downtown Baltimore itself, and the benefits that these facilities provide is diminished due to the distance. However, Downtown Baltimore does have a number of smaller parks and plazas, as well as the harborfront, which functions as a sort of highly programmed green space. While some open spaces in cities are left largely unregulated, Baltimore's harborfront spaces, driven primarily by tourism, are highly regulated as to promote an appearance of safety and stability. With this tradeoff of more regulation in the name of public safety, the accessibility of the harborfront as a park space is lessened. Certain groups or individuals (typically artistic or political in nature) are discouraged or regularly turned away from using the harborfront as a gathering place due to the potentially controversial or inflammatory feelings that they might engender towards park users. Despite this partial loss of social functionality, the harborfront does still offer much needed environmental benefits to the green-starved central core.

Destination developments like the Charles Center and Inner Harbor projects have proven to be the most durable and successful ingredients of Downtown Baltimore's revival. Unlike any of the other elements discussed, the viability of Downtown Baltimore's rebirth would likely not have been as strong if these major attractions had not come to fruition. These entertainment enhanced destination developments have brought renewed focus to Baltimore's historic city center, increased pedestrian activity, and retained the importance of Downtown Baltimore as a major employment center.

Housing and Residential Components

Since the time of its initial settlement in 1729, there have always been people living in what is now known as Downtown Baltimore. A more in depth look into the urban geography of the city reveals several patterns regarding the settlement of neighborhoods in the core, and why they have attracted the residents that they currently possess.⁸⁹ Like a typical American city, Baltimore's central business district sprang up within the established, historic core of the city. Over time it has drifted slightly eastward, containing a majority of the skyscrapers and high rises that make up the city's skyline. It is an area predominated by big businesses, though in time a small resident population has returned, notably in mixed use buildings such as the Charles Center. The Inner Harbor district abuts the waterfront promenade and is primarily a tourism and commerce based area that claims a minimal amount of residents within its boundaries. It does play an important role in downtown housing by providing retail shops, goods, services, and entertainment to adjoining residential precincts that lack their own commercial base.

Camden Yards lies directly west of the Inner Harbor and is the site of the major sports complexes for football and baseball. A relatively new re-integration into the urban fabric of the core, Camden Yards does not yet have a strong population or retail base, though many residential and commercial proposals are planned for the neighborhood owing to its superb transit links. The Westside District is increasingly becoming the residential center of Downtown Baltimore. Many new developments are springing up in this neighborhood including the Market Center and the Superblock⁹⁰, a site of hundreds of condos and apartments paired with retail space at ground level. People congregate in

⁸⁹ Brown, Catherine. Baltimore Community Revitalization & Neighborhood Politics. College Park: University of Maryland, 2006.

⁹⁰ Curtis, Jennifer Keats. "WestSide Superblock." Maryland Life, March 15, 2012. <http://www.marylandlife.com/culture/endangered-maryland/westside-superblock/> (accessed October 20, 2013).

this area due to its proximity to major employers, educational opportunities, and a strong performing arts corridor.

Mount Vernon is on the north side of downtown and is known as the cultural district. This high density precinct is known for its wide array of bar, club, and lounge offerings and is the heart of the city's nightlife. Many people call the neighborhood home, living in restored townhouses and brownstones within the district (many of which are multistory and have been converted into several smaller apartment units each). Mount Vernon also provides a home to the city's symphony and opera houses, as well as the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University. Nearby Penn Station offers residents access to the local transportation network, as well as providing high speed access to neighboring metro areas. The push to provide more residential space in downtown has allowed increasing numbers of new people to move in, ranging from students and young urban professionals on one end to senior citizens and aging baby boomers on the other. This housing renaissance is not a wholly organic movement—there are some key organizations and innovative strategies being utilized to help shape the housing increase in Downtown Baltimore.

Established in 1937, the Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC) is the fifth largest public housing authority in the country, serving 20,000 residents in more than 10,000 units.⁹¹ Scattered across the city, the department's portfolio includes 28 family developments, 17 mixed population buildings, and two senior centers. HABC administers the Housing Choice voucher program, which provides rental assistance subsidies to more than 12,000 families annually. The HABC is also involved in community development projects and building code enforcement. Initiated by Mayor

⁹¹ "About Us." Baltimore Housing. http://www.baltimorehousing.org/about_us (accessed October 15, 2013).

Stephanie Rawlings Blake in 2010, the HABC's 'Vacants to Values' program is the signature effort being pursued by the agency to improve housing within Baltimore's city limits.⁹² The abandoned properties scattered throughout the city present a problem for the city's image and character. They are seen as the embodiment of urban blight, bringing down adjacent property values, visually ruining the landscape, and damaging the perception of safety. Taking the initiative to clean up and redevelop these properties can reverse that negative trend. By taking more ownership in their surroundings, the community can realize higher property values, economic stimulation through increased business investment, additional tax revenues that can be funneled into amenity and infrastructure improvements, and ultimately an increase in resident population. The Vacants to Value program follows six key strategies to improve residential housing stock in the city.⁹³

VACANTS TO VALUES: Key Strategies

Strategy 1: Streamline the Disposition of City-Owned Properties

Reorganization, increased marketing, and improvement of pricing policy are aimed at making the sale of city owned properties a clear, predictable, and transparent process.

Strategy 2: Streamline Code Enforcement in Stronger Markets

Working with the city on code enforcement allows scattered vacant properties in strong or established neighborhoods avoid the court system and go straight to rehabilitation.

⁹² Benfield, Kaid. "A Second Life for Some of Baltimore's Vacant Properties." the Atlantic Cities. <http://www.theatlanticcities.com/design/2013/05/second-life-some-baltimores-vacant-lots/5764/> (accessed October 22, 2013).

⁹³ "Vacants to Value Strategies." Welcome to Baltimore Housing. http://www.baltimorehousing.org/vtov_strategies (accessed October 18, 2013).

Strategy 3: Facilitate Investment in Emerging Markets

On high-vacancy blocks adjacent to strong neighborhoods, the city is pushing Community Development Clusters aimed at creating jobs and building energy for upcoming neighborhoods.

Strategy 4: Targeted Homebuying Incentives

A variety of local, state, and federal programs offer incentives for buying a home in the city. While these apply to any home in the city, Vacants to Value is targeting vacant properties for the use of these financial credits.

Strategy 5: Support Large-Scale Redevelopment in Distressed Areas

In deeply distressed areas with concentrated abandonment, large scale redevelopment remains a critical tool.

Strategy 6: Demolish and Maintain Severely Distressed Blocks

Recognizing that not every vacant building can be revitalized, Vacants to Value also advocates targeted demolition, land banking, and active promotion of creative non-housing uses to support long-term housing value.

While the program is still relatively new, it has seen its share of successes. In the Fells Point neighborhood, immediately south of Downtown, a former police station dating back to the 1800s has been rehabilitated into a 47-unit apartment building on the waterfront. One quarter of the units are set at below market-rate rents, and the building has already generated a tremendous response from the community with all units being fully leased. Vacant since 1996, the Edelweiss building on Covington Street was originally built as a factory in 1860 and has remained standing due to its National Park Service historic designation. Under Vacants to Values, the four story building was transformed into loft apartments with ground floor retail space, a fitness center, a landscaped interior courtyard, and energy saving features.⁹⁴ By strengthening code

⁹⁴ "Vacants to Value Brings Redevelopment to Upper Fells Point." Baltimore Housing. http://www.baltimorehousing.org/wgo_detail.aspx?id=574 (accessed October 19, 2013).

enforcement, streamlining the sale of vacant city property, promoting rehabilitation and reuse, and offering financial incentives to homebuyers and developers, the HABC and its Vacants to Values program are getting the abandoned properties across the city cleaned up and redeveloped more quickly and efficiently than in the past. Momentum for the mayor's initiative is spreading to Downtown too, presenting the opportunity to turn something old and worn out into something new and exciting.

The other organization aiming to promote downtown housing is the Downtown Partnership for Baltimore. Founded in 1987, the non-profit corporation seeks to create a more vibrant community for residents, businesses, property owners, employees, and visitors alike. The Partnership oversees the Downtown Management Authority (DMA), the body which delivers programs intended on fostering infrastructure investment, improving quality of life, and retaining business concerns in the central city. In addition, DMA and the Partnership work together to assist in finding solutions to transportation issues, improving parks and open spaces, implementing workforce development programs, and growing the number of residents and retailers in downtown. Commercial property owners in the 106-block district are levied a 21.39-cent tax per \$100 dollars in valuation that funds the DMA and related functions.⁹⁵ This setup is similar to a TIF zone, but instead of paying with future revenue (the increment), the funds are obtained directly through current tax assessment values. The Partnership's main tool for promoting residential growth is through the use of office conversions. As commercial buildings age they depreciate and become more outdated over time. With many of the buildings in Baltimore's center reaching the point of obsolescence, the DMA offers a spate of federal, state, and local tax breaks aimed at encouraging repurposing of these old offices to serve

⁹⁵ "[About Us]." Downtown Partnership of Baltimore and Downtown Management Authority. <http://www.godowntownbaltimore.com/AboutUs/index.aspx> (accessed October 19, 2013).

a residential function. If a project meets certain criteria, these tax abatements are granted, with additional breaks for various project types: brownfield redevelopments, low income housing, senior housing, affordable units, or economic development. This scheme has proven to be relatively successful, with nearly half of the office space taken offline returning to the market as residential space.⁹⁶ In the 3rd quarter of FY 2012, 22 million square feet of office space was taken off the market, while 12 million of that square footage returned to valid usage as apartments, condominiums, or co-ops. Conversions also change the city's landscape by helping to offset vacancies left by large tenants, who over the years have shifted from the traditional CBD core to newer, more technologically innovative spaces in the Harbor East district. Some large tenants are still drawn by the power of the suburbs, which are able to offer generous financial incentive packages to lure businesses away from cash-strapped urban cities (such as Baltimore). While there is an initial drop off in tax revenues for qualifying building conversions, the taxing entities make fiscal gains in the long term once the expiration of tax abatements is factored in. Additionally, the taxable value of the buildings increases due to the upgrades and improvements made during the renovation phase.

Although the Housing Authority and the Downtown Partnership employ different strategies, both are in pursuit of the same primary goal of increasing the quality and quantity of Downtown Baltimore's residential stock. Housing not only provides a basic function as a shelter, but it also helps to diversify land use in the core, attract new spending and investment in infrastructure, and adds to the city's coffers by increasing land values through the tax base. In the coming years, both the HABC and the

⁹⁶ Drummer, Randy. "Developers Increasingly Find It Can Pay To Convert Office Buildings Into Apartments and Condos." National Commercial Real Estate News. <http://goo.gl/UJ3Een> (accessed October 30, 2013).

Partnership plan to continue their efforts in attracting new housing, while at the same time preserving and maintaining the racial, class, and income diversity.

Historic Preservation: CHAP and the National Register of Historic Places

As a consequence of its long and rich history, Downtown Baltimore possesses a wealth of historic and architecturally significant buildings. Today they are recognized for the added value they give to the city and are highly desirable as renovated spaces for offices, residences, storefronts, or hotel uses. However, this has not always been the case. A seismic shift in the landscape occurred in 1964, when the city of Baltimore established the Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP), whose mission is to “enhance and promote the culture and economy of Baltimore through the preservation of buildings, structures, sites, and neighborhoods that have aesthetic, historic, and architectural value.” Among CHAP’s duties are locating potential landmark buildings, lobbying for historic improvement tax credits, scouting and defining Planned Unit Developments (PUD’s) or Tax Increment Finance Zones (TIF’s), and coordinating various steps and required bureaucratic filings necessary in building preservation.⁹⁷

In addition to the establishment of CHAP, the year 1964 also brought about the Mount Vernon Urban Renewal Ordinance, which required preservation over demolition for buildings in the neighborhood directly north of Downtown Baltimore. On the national level, the Federal Historic Preservation Act was passed in 1966, in response to the planning failures of urban renewal. People feared the loss of their community identity due to the increasing frequency of razing and rebuilding in sensitive historic areas. In 1967, concerned citizens groups formed the Society for the Preservation of Federal Hill in order to block proposed interstate highways from cutting off their

⁹⁷ "Historic Preservation Procedures and Design Guidelines." Downtown Partnership of Baltimore. <http://goo.gl/2rJsNy> (accessed October 22, 2013).

waterfront neighborhoods from the rest of the city. They succeeded by pursuing National Register for Historic Places designation, thwarting the highway projects and all of the potential negative externalities they would have inevitably brought. 1971 saw the first set of individual landmarks designated, including the City Hall building.⁹⁸ Innovation was brought to the fore in 1973, when a unique ‘urban homesteading’ program was initiated in the Otterbein neighborhood immediately to the south of Downtown. One hundred and ten houses were sold to ‘homesteaders’ (referring to the pioneering nature of the settlers going into an unknown and unpopulated land) who agreed to restore the properties and live in them for at least five years. A series of brick rowhouses in the urban Oldtown neighborhood that had been marked for demolition in the name of urban renewal were also spared the fate of the wrecking ball. Once the 1980s arrived, the newly minted Bronze Conservation Program began targeting the cleanup and restoration of significant public monuments across town. 1989 was the year that the Camden Yards got a new lease on life with the advent of the new major league ballpark. While the rail yards were cleared to make way for the Orioles new diamond, the Camden Station and adjoining B&O warehouse were incorporated into the overall design scheme⁹⁹, preserving an important visual, architectural, and historical site for the next generation of Baltimoreans to marvel at. In 1996, the city began a tax credit scheme aimed at local historic restorations and property rehabilitations. In 2001, the Baltimore City Heritage Area was delineated. Deemed “the Heart of the Chesapeake,” this designation by the National Park Service recognizes the contributions Baltimore has made to the national identity and establishes a guide for visitors interested in seeing sites that have important civic or

⁹⁸ "Historic Landmarks in Downtown Baltimore: Incentive-Based Strategies for Preserving Diverse Architecture ." Downtown Partnership of Baltimore. <http://goo.gl/Cvj9RD> (accessed October 22, 2013).

⁹⁹ Harwood, Herbert H.. Impossible Challenge: the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in Maryland. Baltimore, Md.: Barnard, Roberts, 1979.

cultural meaning. CHAP merged with the Baltimore Department of Planning in 2004, furthering the incorporation of historic preservation into planning actions. By the year 2010, Baltimore claimed over fifty National Register Historic districts and thirty locally designated historic districts, including seven districts that were created in just the last decade. Approximately 57,000 individual structures have been saved city-wide as a result of preservation, including the Roland Park Shopping Center (first shopping center in the U.S.), Old City Hall, Fort McHenry, and the Edgar Allan Poe House.¹⁰⁰

The formation of the Commission for Historic and Architectural Preservation was certainly what got the ball rolling in terms of local preservation and reuse in Baltimore's historic core. With the formation of this group came the greater realization that the buildings and sites saved from eradication help to define both the physical qualities and the character for which a community is known. The path which Baltimore has taken in terms of using historic preservation ordinances written into the city code is not uncommon; more than 1,200 communities elect to preserve their local landmarks in this same manner. Preserved landmarks remind us of our shared values and are a window into the past—a past which has shaped who we are today. Without these old buildings and landmarks, Baltimore would lose irreplaceable links to the past and gems of architecture that would be impossible to authentically replicate today. CHAP will remain an integral part of downtown historic preservation for years to come, protecting valuable community assets and saving the face of Baltimore's past. Their activities remain ongoing at the time of this writing.

¹⁰⁰ "Baltimore City's Designated Landmark List." Department of Planning. <http://goo.gl/IdSYgw> (accessed October 20, 2013).

Downtown Baltimore: Why the Charm City is Special

Baltimore, or Charm City as it is informally known, gained its nickname not from the famed writer H.L. Mencken as some people believe, but as a result of a marketing brainstorm in the 1970s.¹⁰¹ During the era of downtown's descent into blight and decay, a group of Baltimore's top advertising executives got together at the request of Mayor William D. Schaefer to think of ways to market and promote their city, which was often overlooked by visitors and bashed by residents of neighboring cities. "Come up with something to promote the city. And do it now! I'm worried about this city's poor image!" declared Schaefer, who feared a continued loss of business and commerce to the suburbs unless drastic actions were undertaken. This was in the era long before Harborplace, the National Aquarium, and Camden Yards had even been imagined. The Charles Center was going up, but more was coming down. The phrase 'Charm City' germinated from the idea that while Baltimore might not be as grand as Washington D.C. or as showy New York, Baltimore had more pockets of hidden charm and history tucked away in quiet corners than any other city. Advertisements went out on radio, TV, and newsprint, and the phrase became a hit. Charm City is as 'Baltimore' today as fresh blue crabs, craft beer, Babe Ruth, marble steps, and row houses.

But aside from the city's unique place in the historic spectrum and its undeniable hidden (and not so hidden) charms, what sets it apart? What is so special about its downtown area compared with other large cities? Downtown Baltimore has practically every imaginable activity a reasonable person might expect to find in a complete downtown. In contrast to other major U.S. cities, Baltimore has world-class cultural centers, entertainment venues, sports arenas, retail activity, plentiful employment, and a

¹⁰¹ Sandler, Gilbert. "How the city's nickname came to be." *Baltimore Sun*, July 18, 1995.

spectrum of housing options all within a one mile radius of “Ground Zero” at the corner of Pratt and Light Streets. In fact, few cities around the world can lay claim to offering similar amenities in such proximity to their core. Baltimore, and Downtown Baltimore in particular, was able to inhibit some of the decline that other northeastern cities faced during the same time period. Certainly some population and business loss did occur, but Baltimoreans used this as an opportunity to initiate innovative programs, invent new strategies, and build useful complexes. Key moments include the initial construction of the Charles Center in 1959, the 1990s PlanBaltimore effort, the revitalization of the Inner Harbor, the Strategic Plan for Downtown Baltimore in 2011, and the reimagination of Camden Yards. The movement of new residents into the core was also particularly critical in creating interest in the downtown area and generating a demand for urban living amenities, such as retailers and services. In order to fully understand the successes that have been wrought by the citizens and officials of Baltimore, an understanding of the past and some of the key players is important to consider.

CHAPTER IV

History and Key Players: What Laid the Groundwork for Baltimore's Successes?

To understand how Downtown Baltimore became the prosperous center that it is today, it is important to take a step back and examine the area's rich history. If it had not been for strong local support, public private partnerships, and political agreements within city government, many of the reforms and elements necessary for Downtown's transformation would not have come about, and modern Baltimore might have fallen into the same rut seen in many other post-industrial U.S. cities.

Brief History and Boundaries

At the corner of Pratt Street and Light Street is the "ground zero" of Baltimore's street numbering system, indicating the central point of the road network and signifying the heart of the city. Modern Downtown Baltimore's boundaries roughly follow along Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. on the west, Mount Royal St. on the north, Jones Falls Expressway and President St. on the east, and Henrietta St. and the Inner Harbor on the south.⁶³ Its location in relation to the harbor and to the rest of the city gives Downtown an advantageous position in terms of its revitalization. Being adjacent to the harborfront attracts residents searching for water views. Equidistant from most points in the metropolitan region, Baltimore's transit networks all converge on the city center, affording Downtown residents with easy access in all directions with many choices of mode.

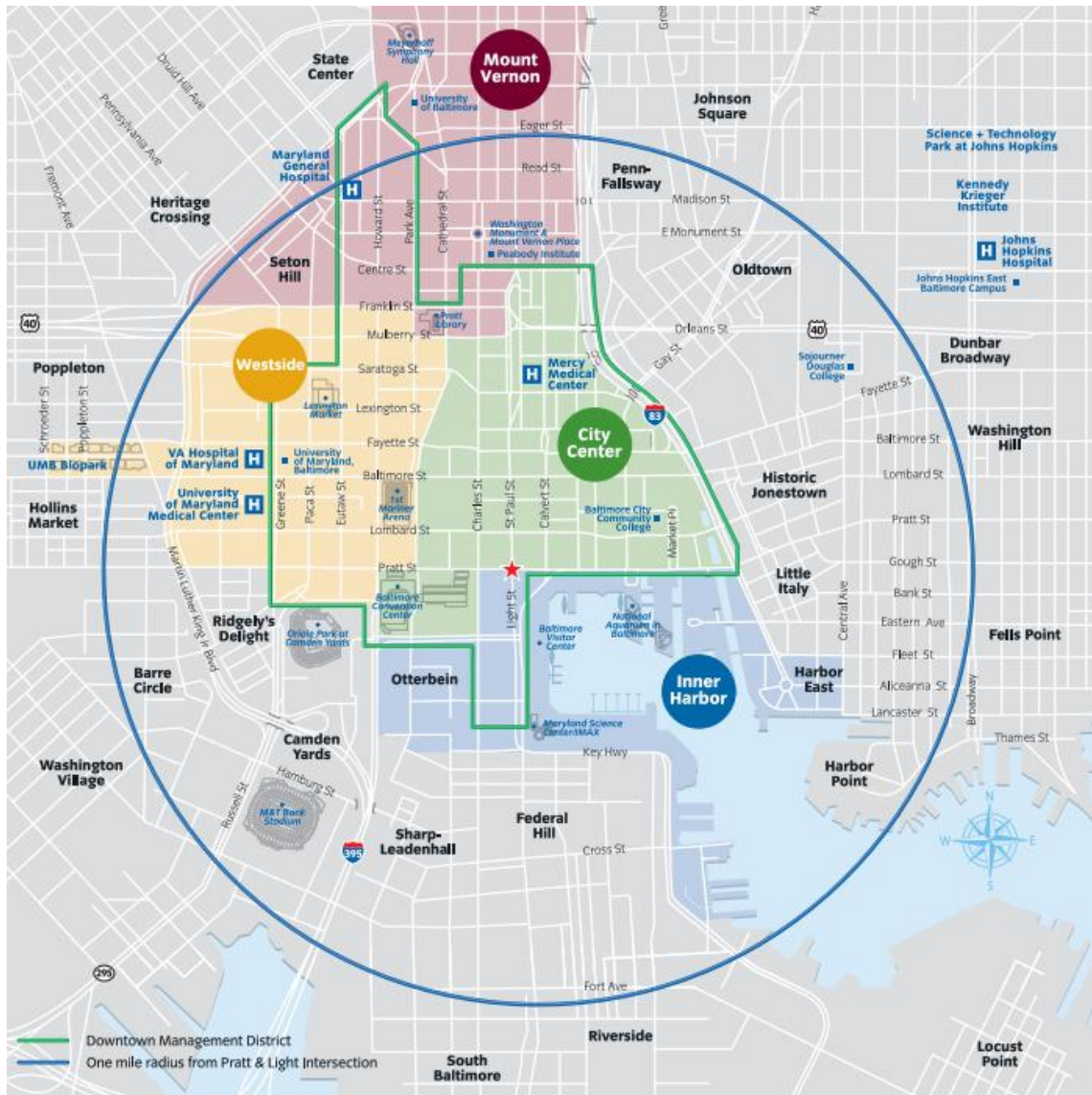


Figure 4.1: Downtown Neighborhoods and Boundaries
Source: 2012 State of Downtown Report, Downtown Partnership of Baltimore.

Originally founded in 1729 as part of the Maryland colony, the city of Baltimore pre-dates the founding of the U.S. by almost five decades. Its namesake is Cecilius Calvert, an Irish nobleman better known as the Lord Baltimore.¹⁰² Situating the city to

¹⁰² Olson, Sherry H.. Baltimore: The Building of an American City. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980.

take advantage of the natural harbor at the mouth of the Patapsco River, colonists quickly flocked to the young settlement, which became a hub for trading in tobacco and rum. The harbor was the lifeblood of the city both physically and economically. Wharves, warehouses, granaries, and marketplaces lined the piers and quays. Money and commerce flowed relatively freely, but gradually taxes and excessive regulations from the British Parliament overseas fomented into an open rebellion against Crown rule. The revolution turned out in favor of the colonists, who were able to gain control over their internal affairs. Between 1776 and 1790, the population of Baltimore doubled from 6,500 to more than 13,000. It doubled again by 1800 and was the second largest grossing port in the young United States of America. It was an entrepot for European immigrants, fleeing the old world in search of a better life. People of many origins and background called the city home, including many free blacks.

Baltimore prospered due to profitable maritime trading links. When the British attempted to thwart America's newfound naval abilities, the Congress declared war on Britain in 1812. The British sacked the city in 1814, causing widespread damage. Native Marylander and Baltimorean Francis Scott Key, who witnessed the attack from a ship moored in the harbor later penned a song commemorating the battle. Titled "The Star Spangled Banner," the song today serves as our national anthem and is known worldwide as a symbol of the United States. Fort McHenry, the location where American troops successfully defended Baltimore's harbor, remains intact and is a popular destination to the present day.

Fast growth continued over the next few decades, with milling and shipbuilding becoming major economic activities. Transportation links to cities along the Atlantic seaboard improved, and with the advent of the railroad in the mid 1840s, Baltimore became one of the first major termini established on the continent. The B&O Railroad,

crossing the Appalachian Mountain chain, linked Baltimore with lucrative new Midwest markets, and opened up the interior of the country for exploration and settlement. Railroads also ushered in a new industrial era for the city, which rapidly became a center for manufacturing and production. Between 1830 and 1850, Baltimore was the second largest city in the country, only edged out by New York City. As growth continued, the skyline gradually began to take shape. Churches and monuments were featured heavily, leading to President John Quincy Adams to delegate Baltimore the nickname “the Monument City” after a visit in 1827.

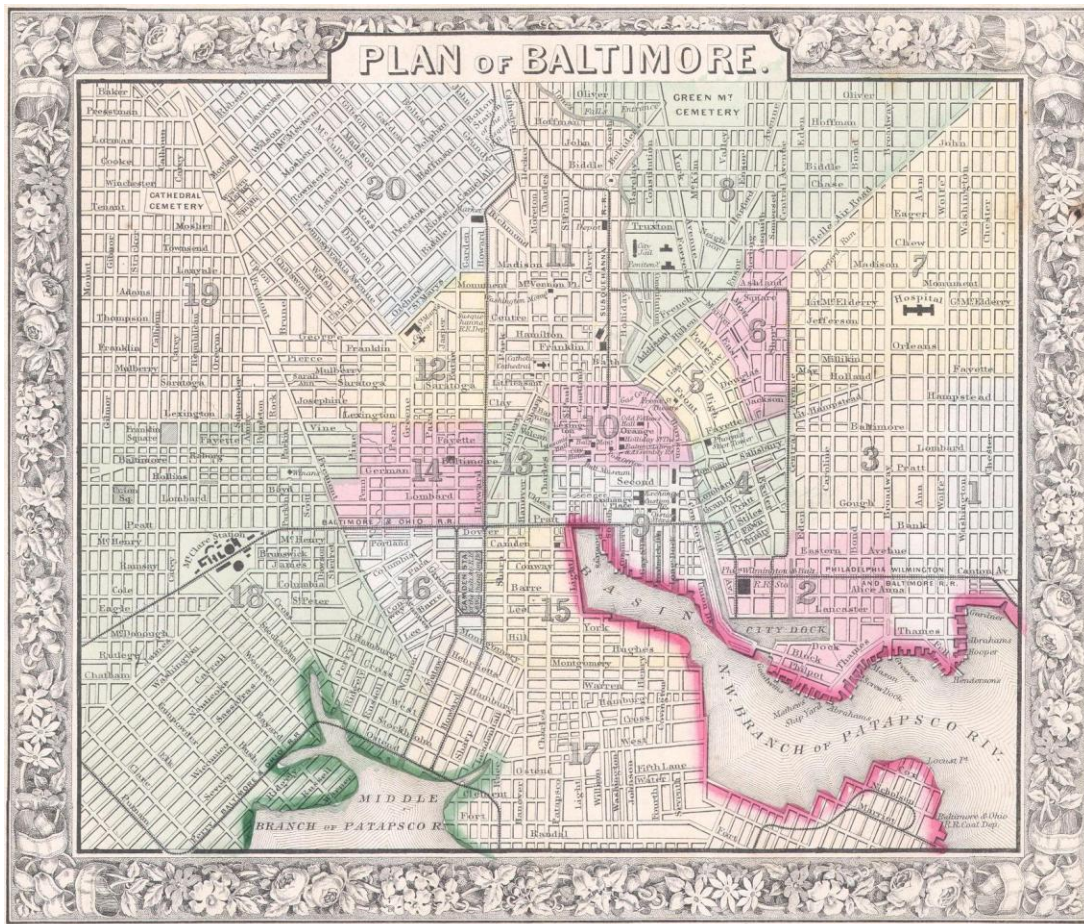


Figure 4.2: 1864 Mitchell Map of Baltimore
Source: Geographicus Fine Antique Maps. <http://goo.gl/nk2BcT>

Catastrophe hit in 1904 when a large portion of the downtown area burned down, leaving a loss of 1,500 buildings in the course of just 24 hours. Baltimoreans, clever as always, turned the disaster into a learning moment, allowing them to instate new, more stringent codes related to the planning of the city. The disaster that was the fire turned out to be a blessing in disguise.

Going into the 20th century, Baltimore's hegemony over the state and the region continued due in large part to the dominance of the shipbuilding and shipping industries. Both World Wars I and II increased production and attracted more skilled workers eager to lend a hand in the war effort. After the conclusion of these conflicts, many of those people decided to stay in Baltimore. By 1950 the population had reached 949,708. Unfortunately, the trajectory of continual growth ended around this time as the newly minted suburbs began to draw people away from urban life in ever faster numbers. This 'flight' led to rapid inner city decay and abandonment of otherwise inhabitable neighborhoods.

But resilient Baltimore decided to look for the silver lining in the moment and re-emerged with a plan in hand. Ambitious urban renewal efforts began by targeting the central business district. Gradually people began to realize a value in the old (but crumbling due to a lack of maintenance or occupation over several years) buildings and in response the city set up historic preservation ordinances within the city code, allowing for redevelopment of distressed buildings. Baltimore, which had turned its back on the harbor after the suburban flight, decided to turn around once more and celebrate the natural ecological settings that the harbor provides. Hotels, offices, and entertainment facilities sprung up around the water's edge, helping to bring attention and excitement back downtown where it had been missing for so long. The Harborplace, the Maryland Science Center, and the National Aquarium replaced dilapidated wharves and warehouses

along the quayside. Camden Yards found a new lease on life with the construction of two innovative major sports stadiums housing the city's baseball and football teams. Educational institutions, like the University of Maryland and Johns Hopkins University, recruited biotechnology experts from far and wide, leading many top scientists to settle in Baltimore as a result. A wealth of museums and cultural centers were made available to entertain and educate the populace. Historic industrial and commercial buildings found new uses and became housing for the streams of new people flocking in to experience (or re-experience) downtown living.



Figure 4.3: Panorama of Baltimore Inner Harbor, 2012
Source: Baltimore Inner Harbor Travel Guide. <http://goo.gl/NMqN0X>

Historically a blue collar, working class town focused on the port and industries, modern Baltimore is centered around a service based economy, augmented by high tech, medicine, and tourism. The Inner Harbor's successful transformation has become a model emulated by other cities worldwide seeking to promote and reimagine their downtown districts. Baltimore remains a city of neighborhoods, but it is still best known by its unofficial moniker, "Charm City." Residents take immense pride in their city, which boasts one of the most remarkable turnarounds in history.

Office of the Mayor: from D'Alesandro to Rawlings Blake

The office of Mayor of Baltimore has traditionally been a powerful one. Utilizing a strong mayor-council system of governance, the mayor has the ability to prepare a city budget and wields significant control over administrative appointments. As the head of the largest city in the state and the most prominent figurehead in the largest media market, the mayoralty has traditionally been a stepping stone to higher office. Baltimore has had 8 mayors and 2 acting mayors since 1947. Three Baltimore mayors went on to serve as Governor of the State of Maryland, continuing their support of the city through initiatives, grants, and other fiscal tools.

Table 4.1: Mayors of Baltimore, 1947-2013

Mayor	Term Began	Term Ended	Political Party	Other Offices Held	Notable Development Achievements
Thomas D'Alesandro, Jr.	1947	1959	Democrat	House	Charles Center
Theodore R. McKeldin	1963	1967	Republican	Governor	Inner Harbor
Thomas D'Alesandro III	1967	1971	Democrat	House	Urban Renewal
William Donald Schaefer	1971	1987	Democrat	Governor	Harborplace
Kurt L. Schmoke	1987	1999	Democrat		Harbor East
Martin J. O'Malley	1999	2007	Democrat	Governor	Smart Growth/Mass Transit
Sheila Dixon	2007	2010	Democrat		MTA Red Line
Stephanie Rawlings-Blake	2010	present	Democrat		Vacants to Value, Arts Districts

Source: Wikipedia contributors, "Baltimore Mayors," Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_mayors_of_Baltimore

Baltimore's downtown revival goes all the way back to 1947 when Mayor Thomas D'Alesandro was in office. In response to the Committee for Downtown and the subsequent Greater Baltimore Committee, the mayor got behind the push to raise money to fund a dramatic city center plan aimed at maintaining downtown's hegemony over the newly popular suburbs. By looking firsthand at other cities experiencing similar

problems and pursuing urban renewal strategies, Mayor D'Alesandro approved the plan for the 33-acre Charles Center in 1958, with construction beginning after voters' approval of a bond package in 1959.¹⁰³ D'Alesandro, after visiting Pittsburgh to see their successful Golden Triangle downtown redevelopment declared, "Pittsburgh has Mellons; Baltimore has watermelons." The comparison was between the Mellons, a famous banking and philanthropic family to the watermelons being sold along Baltimore's waterfront at the time, one of the few signs of commercial activity left in the downtown core. Few people at the time thought that downtown could recover from all the business and population loss.

Theodore McKeldin, one of the rare Republican politicians elected in historically blue Baltimore, was the impetus behind the Inner Harbor's turnaround and revival. As a proponent of the urban renewal wave that was in its prime during his term in office, McKeldin as mayor led the city to "turn to the waterfront," to utilize the natural features that the city was built around.¹⁰⁴ Challenges to reviving the harbor front came in from all sides: physical, financial, and political. McKeldin and his appointed planning officials began constructing the first stages of the redevelopment in 1963. At the 240-acre project's heart was a long promenade that opened up public access to the downtown waterfront, setting the stage for eventual private investment nearby. To finance this expensive endeavor, the city successfully applied for urban renewal funds through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the first of many applications for federal funds over the next few decades.

¹⁰³ Bowden, Mark. "Bossin' Around: A History Of How Things Got Done In Baltimore." *Citypaper*, August 1, 2007.

¹⁰⁴ Brodie, Jay. "How Eminent Domain, Charles Center and the Inner Harbor Sparked Baltimore's Comeback." *Baltimore Business Journal*, November 2013. <http://goo.gl/iGYvgd> (accessed November 8, 2013).

William Donald Schaefer was known as the “get it done” mayor.¹⁰⁵ Mayor Schaefer's dynamic and forceful leadership through several controversial issues was a model of political determination. Viewing risks something to be overcome rather than avoided, him and his team worked with neighborhood groups to help renew troubled areas such as Harlem Park, Bolton Hill, and Madison Park South. In contrast to many other cities at the time, Schaefer pursued a policy of extensive community engagement regarding development plans, resulting in preservation paired with new construction, rather than the more common tear down and rebuild method in vogue at the time. His most well known contribution to the city is the Harborplace development at the Inner Harbor. The towering hotels and glittering tourist attractions that are scattered throughout the area owe their existence to Mayor Schaefer, who sought federal funding for their construction. The Convention Center, the National Aquarium, and the Camden Yards project all would not have gotten off the ground if not for the tenacity and constant outreach by Mayor (and later Governor) Schaefer.

More recent mayors like Martin O'Malley have focused on mass transit and improving the economic climate of the city. Succeeding to the governorship in 2007, O'Malley has continued to fight for transit improvements and economic development packages. Working with the legislature in Annapolis, Governor O'Malley passed the Transportation Infrastructure Investment Act of 2013, allowing Maryland to accomplish long term transportation goals across the state.¹⁰⁶ These investments in transit systems, totaling \$4.4 billion dollars will put provide jobs to those working in the transportation and construction industries, stimulate hundreds of millions of dollars in economic

¹⁰⁵ *Baltimore Sun*, "The Hero of the City," April 18, 2011.

¹⁰⁶ "Governor O'Malley Announces Nearly \$1.5 Billion in Transportation Investments for Baltimore Metropolitan Region." Governor of Maryland. <http://www.governor.maryland.gov/blog/?p=9132> (accessed November 8, 2013).

activity, and will give Marylanders a way out of the gridlock and bottlenecks that they face on a daily basis. The Baltimore region specifically will get \$1.5 billion in new transit investments towards infrastructure, supporting 13,000 jobs over the next six years, attempting to alleviate traffic congestion, and helping to revitalize communities along the way.

Stephanie Rawlings Blake is the incumbent mayor at the time of this writing. Her focus has been integrating the arts into the city's ongoing revival, as well as her signature 'Vacants to Value' program in partnership with the city planning department.¹⁰⁷ Mayor Rawlings Blake has continued to support her predecessor's policies regarding redevelopment and has been tenacious in attracting and supporting development and new growth in the Downtown and Inner Harbor areas.¹⁰⁸ Working with the Baltimore Development Corporation and the Downtown Partnership for Baltimore, she has offered generous tax incentive packages to approved large scale developers and encouraged TIF zones that benefit communities and smaller developers. The mayor also supports the Superblock development on the west side of Downtown, offering \$22.1 million in tax abatements to development and real estate groups working to turn the site from abandoned to built out.

Organizations and Partnerships

Individuals such as mayors and governors have certainly contributed to the successes of Baltimore's revival, but organizations have played a significant role as well. Public-private partnerships in particular have helped to bridge the gap in difficult

¹⁰⁷ "Vacants to Value Strategies." Welcome to Baltimore Housing. http://www.baltimorehousing.org/vtov_strategies (accessed October 18, 2013).

¹⁰⁸ "Growing Economy." Mayor of Baltimore-Solutions. <http://rawlingsblake.com/growing-economy> (accessed November 8, 2013).

situations where development would not have occurred organically in a timely basis. P3's, as they are also known, require patience and flexibility from both parties but can yield unorthodox or otherwise unachievable outcomes.¹⁰⁹ Facilities and services that are usually provided via the public sector can be more efficiently designed and supplied with the managerial acumen and free market responsiveness afforded by the private sector. The public sector brings to the table social responsibility and an established framework for achieving goals.

In addition to collaborating and sharing resources, the risks and rewards of each P3 venture are also shared between the parties. Typically, the private partner will contractually agree to bear some financial, technical, or operational risk related to a public works project in exchange for user revenues or some other useful stake in the project. Public entities and the public at large get the benefits from the needed service or infrastructure sooner rather than later. Cooperation between the public sector and private business breaks down silos and helps reinforce a spirit of teamwork and trust. High quality and well planned developments have been born of this arrangement, which has become increasingly popular in recent years.¹¹⁰

The Downtown Partnership for Baltimore has been the most active and visible group forging public-private partnerships in the city. Harbor redevelopment, housing, arts initiatives, and transportation improvements likely would not have occurred as quickly as they have had it not been for P3's.¹¹¹ Renewed development potential seen around the Downtown area can also be attributed to the city's commitment in terms of

¹⁰⁹ "7 Keys to Success." National Council for Public Private Partnerships. <http://www.ncppp.org/ppp-basics/7-keys/> (accessed November 12, 2013).

¹¹⁰ Reutter, Mark. "Baltimore Brew." MTA Eyes Private Partner for Red Line. <http://www.baltimorebrew.com/2013/04/15/mta-eyes-possible-private-partner-for-red-line/> (accessed November 12, 2013).

¹¹¹ "Initiatives." Downtown Partnership of Baltimore. <http://godowntownbaltimore.com/docs/Initiatives.pdf> (accessed November 10, 2013).

ordinances, code enforcement, and financial backing. In 2013, the International Downtown Association granted Baltimore a prestigious Merit Award to recognize the work that the Partnership currently undertaking in the Hopkins Plaza redevelopment in Downtown.¹¹² Baltimore's successes are beginning to be recognized as a model to follow for urban cities across the nation and the world.

¹¹² "News Release." International Downtown Association.
<http://www.godowntownbaltimore.com/flash/IDAaward.pdf> (accessed November 12, 2013).

CHAPTER V

Conclusions and Final Observations

Today, Baltimore serves as a model for successful urban redevelopment. While other cities across the nation attempt to redevelop and reimagine their downtown districts, few have achieved such organic success as Baltimore. Integration of land uses and incorporation of several divergent elements was vital in setting Baltimore's revival apart. By turning its attention and focus outward towards its finest natural gift, the Inner Harbor, Baltimore was able to capitalize on its superb geographic setting. The abundance of activities and the easy access to employers have made Downtown Baltimore a residential hub, aiding in the transition to a mixed use neighborhood and lending a vibrancy to the core that did not exist in years prior. Tourists also flock to Downtown to visit the many one-of-a-kind attractions and to experience the rich history and charms that Baltimore is famous for.

But when it comes to the technical aspects of how Baltimore arrived to its current position, it is important to look at the ingredients that made everything possible. The proximity and density offered by downtown living are key. A variety of building ages allows preservation of historic characteristics while providing modern buildings necessary for strong residential and commercial communities. Citizen support, both in sentiment and through the ballot box, has also demonstrated a positive effect on Downtown. Officials and planners from across the city and the region have done a good job in maintaining the most vital organ in the city's system, its heart.

Certainly the concept of urban revitalization has received much thought and continued refinement over the past two decades, but still no standard definition has emerged. When addressing the question of what constitutes a successful 'revival',

planning experts, elected officials, and the public at large seem to agree on several key metrics: demographics, socioeconomics, quality of life, and image. Discord between groups regarding which of these is the more important or useful measurement results in the lack of agreement regarding the definition of urban revitalization. Taking a wider angle approach, some believe that these types of metrics are interrelated and that by reviving any one of the four or five elements will cause a revival across the others, but there remains to this day no concise agreement upon where to begin.

Attracting residents and businesses to a city's core is crucial to a city's revival. Past research indicates that people base the location of their residence on several considerations, chief among them proximity to their place of employment and diversity of services/amenity offerings nearby. Position in the life cycle and pursuit of social image also affect why people choose to settle where they do. Literature also suggests that some groups shun cities in favor of suburbs, while others prefer city life. Much of this depends on age, household size, and income level. Recent studies contend that two groups, young singles and childless couples are more likely to congregate in urban settings. Cities have utilized a variety of strategies to attract homeowners, ranging from tax breaks to TIF zones.

Evidence abounds that U.S. cities still struggle in their attempts to recover from decades of job and population loss to the suburbs. Many cities have undertaken attempts to promote growth in their core regions. Investments have been made in new developments and employers have come back downtown in increasing numbers to take advantage of financial incentives. As the manufacturing sector has declined, service based industries have made up the gap. The creative class have become the new middle class and have contributed to the successful turnaround in urban fortunes. Cities have turned from retail to tourism as the generator of vitality. Stadiums, convention centers,

museums, hotels, restaurants, destination developments all help to bring in tourist dollars as well as create a new 'place' within the city for residents to enjoy and experience.

Baltimoreans must not get complacent about the successes of their downtown revival. There will be work ahead in continuing to improve and beautify the core. Downtown must remain focused on housing and job creation, while at the same time maintaining the historic nature and unique attractions it is famed for. Through continued cooperation and a sustained commitment from the citizens of Baltimore, the revival of Downtown can continue to progress.

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